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ABSTRACT

Selective organizational change in the school presents one promising approach for delinquency prevention among young people. The organizational change approach assumes that: (1) delinquency will be reduced when young people are able to show their competence and worth; (2) young people learn socially legitimate behavior mainly in the school; and (3) specific organizational arrangements create opportunities that influence positive behavior. An organizational change project for delinquency prevention might be based on a partnership between personnel of a public elementary or secondary school and outside groups (such as State government agencies or community groups). The project would consist of five implementation sequences. In the first stage, outside groups initiate plans and enter into working agreements with selected schools, and participants in the partnership collaborate on a written plan. In the second stage, the team assesses the school to identify organizational features that influence what happens to students in school. In the third stage, the group uses data from the assessment to make decisions and select areas to be targeted for change. In the fourth phase, the cooperating groups identify specific team roles and then formulate and implement strategies for change. In the final stage, the team conducts an evaluation to determine the effects of change. (Author/MJL)

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DELINQUENCY PREVENTION:

SELECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE SCHOOL

Revised Edition

May 1981

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Justice

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SUMMARY

The school is an appropriate focus for intervention in part because of its central place in young people's lives; its experience with an array of troublesome behavior complicating efforts to teach, its unintentional but systematical contribution to that behavior through its practices of student classification and selection; its rules and regulations; and its student-teacher interactions (frequently using labeling); and its ability to produce delinquency as a result of certain of its practices.

Selective organizational change has in the past reduced troublesome behavior, improved learning, improved the relationship of schools with parents and the community, strengthened the overall program quality, and involved insiders, who become trained in the approach.

The organizational change approach is guided by three major assumptions. *First*, that delinquency behavior will be reduced when young people are able to show their competence and worth to themselves and others. Three theoretical perspectives are bases for this assumption; Bonding and control theory, strain and opportunity theories, and labeling theory. *Second*, the school is a main arena in which young people learn socially legitimate behavior. *Third*, the opportunities that influence positive behavior are largely a matter of organizational arrangement.

The organizational perspective used in this approach seeks explanations for how a school's shared expectations, rules and regulations, policies, and practices distinguish it from other social situations. This approach is separate from the individual approach, which seeks to understand what happens by studying the strengths and weaknesses of individuals or groups. The unfamiliarity of the approach, its complexity, and the habitual, routine nature of school life make the application of the approach difficult. Therefore, the project uses the approach of a partnership between school personnel and outside groups to aid in translating the organizational ideas into practice.

The implementation sequence has five stages. In the first, entering into relationships with local schools, outside groups make decisions and reach agreements about the work to be attempted, make up a list of potential schools, negotiate with the schools to arrive at working agreements with a small number, and organize support within a school for an organizational change approach. At the end of stage one, partners should have a written plan against which practical experience can be judged.

Stage two, assessing the school situation, calls for making a careful assessment of the school and selecting one or more aspects of the school to change.

During stage three, selecting a target for change, the team roles will need to be renegotiated, judgment exercised on the basis of the descriptions, and discussions held on the theoretical implications of the school's present practice. Partners should ask if the proposed change is theoretically or conceptually an appropriate thing to try and if it can be tried in that particular school.

Stage four of the implementation sequence, making the change, involves another renegotiating of roles among partners, formulating of a strategy for accomplishing the particular change, and, as work progresses, the arranging of in-services workshops to get help on implementation problems.

During stage five, evaluating the effects, partners will judge the consequences of the changes; whether there was, in fact, a change; and what forms the change took. The change should be able to be observed, recorded, and measured.

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary theory and research on the causes of delinquency conclude that organizational policies and practices affect interaction patterns and that these patterns, in turn, affect the behavior of individual youths.

In an earlier phase of this work, the monograph *Juvenile Delinquency: Theories and Strategies* (written for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice) suggested a distinct and accountable program for delinquency prevention. The monograph advanced delinquency prevention practice by reviewing the field, selecting promising options, and refining those options. Two recommended program approaches to delinquency prevention were developed. The first was *selective organizational changes* in the school, workplace, and community that contribute to the reduction of delinquency and that strengthen factors favorable to law-abiding behavior among young people generally. The second approach was *self-contained programs* that provide limited and selected populations of youth with direct opportunities to achieve legitimacy.[1]

Selective Organizational Change in Schools is the subject of this paper.[2] By presenting desirable program features and by projecting a sequence of implementation, the paper aims to guide state or local program sponsors in designing and conducting effective delinquency prevention initiatives in schools; further, it aims to offer school personnel a perspective on and set of strategies for participating in collaborative partnerships based on shared commitments to school improvement. This volume includes:

- A set of guiding assumptions about what program strategies are appropriate:[3] These assumptions, tied directly to the most promising delinquency prevention theory, will give a

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[1] Legitimacy is defined as usefulness, competency, belonging, interest, and influence (Polk, 1971).

[2] For a description of self-contained programs in schools, see Johnson, Cohen, and Bird (1979).

[3] An excerpt from Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies, proposing several possible directions for practical applications in schools, is included in this volume as appendix B. That excerpt introduces program possibilities derived from theory and research, but does not trace the theoretical development or discuss the research evidence in detail. Reference to and use of both volumes is encouraged.

program direction; they can be applied to the examination of local circumstances, the development of priorities for improvement, and the design of a program of change. These principles are the substance of the approach; they are the basis of arrangements that encourage positive behavior and thus a view of the possible changes to be made in local schools. They give a context for viewing situations or problems, a way of judging the worth and relevance of program ideas.

- A Focus on the Routine Policies and Practices of a School Is Proposed: The assumptions made and the advice offered are intended to aid persons in examining those routine features of school life for ways to decrease troublesome behavior. Programs of selective organizational change call for strengthening those aspects of school life that demonstrably contribute to learning and to admired behavior, and modifying or eliminating those aspects of school life that unintentionally but nonetheless demonstrably contribute to failure and to troublesome behavior. Not discussed is the development of separate remedial programs, alternative schools, or any other add-on that leaves existing school operations unexamined and untouched.

- A Sequence of Implementation is Proposed That is Based on a Set of Strategic Principles About What Will be Effective in Translating Good Ideas Into Sound and Durable Practices: Drawing from experience and from current literature on educational change, strategies and tactics have been proposed for initiating and conducting a project of selective organizational change in schools. The implementation sequence calls for a collaborative set of working relationships within schools and between schools and outside sponsors or consultants; for a design that reflects both theoretical principles and practical realities of the school; and for an evaluation that relies on several methods to document the conditions and consequences of the change effort.

2. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

2.1 Reasons for Basing Delinquency-Prevention Initiatives in Schools

Delinquency-prevention programs in schools have been the exception rather than the rule, and programs aimed at changing the school situation (rather than individual students) are even more rare. Persons interested in initiating such efforts can advance three arguments in favor of school-based programs.

First, schools are central to the present lives and future prospects of young people. One's standing as a student may be the single most important determinant of a young person's standing in the world; it affects relations with peers, employers, and even family. It should not be surprising, then, that experiences in school influence more than cognitive learning, and that they spill over into behavior and interactions with others both in and out of school. *The school is an appropriate focus for intervention in part because of its central place in the lives of young people.*

Second, a considerable amount of troublesome behavior takes place in schools. In meetings with school administrators or teachers, complaints about classroom disruption, truancy, vandalism, and even violence are quick to surface. Studies of school violence and vandalism have increased in the last ten years. State legislators and local policy-makers have addressed issues of school attendance and disruptive behavior.

As demands on schools increase--demands to accomplish more diverse goals, with greater numbers of students, over longer periods of time--schools' influence over troublesome behavior is increasingly at issue. *The school is a relevant and appropriate focus for intervention in part because it is witness to an array of troublesome behavior and because schools have a stake in preventing or reducing that behavior. That is, delinquency prevention is a practical problem for schools.*

Third, the social organization of schools--the routine policies and practices, the daily interactions--is *consequential* in ways that bear importantly on success and failure, order or trouble. The evidence is that schools *do* make a difference to the ways that students learn and act.[1] This is the least widely recognized but most powerful argument

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[1] Research into the nature of effective and ineffective schools offers persuasive evidence that the "internal life of schools" exerts considerable influence, independent of any characteristics (like family background) that students bring with them to the school. Some of this research is reviewed in *Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies.* For a more thorough review, not restricted to delinquency issues, see Rutter et al. (1979) and Edmonds (1978).

in favor of interventions in schools. Just as schools demonstrably contribute to gains in learning and to patterns of approved or admired behavior, so they demonstrably (even if unintentionally) contribute to failures in learning and to behavior that is disruptive, unproductive, or illegal. While still incomplete, the present evidence is sufficiently persuasive to warrant testing its practical implications.

This argument is sufficiently unfamiliar (and sufficiently difficult to mount without appearing to assign blame) that its proponents will probably be called upon to present proof. Evidence marshalled in *Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies* suggests that the school, while not the only influence on troublesome behavior, is nonetheless a powerful influence. Especially among secondary school students, school effects outweigh the effects of home and family; influential peer relations appear to be shaped in large part by school experiences. Reporting the results of a rigorous logitudinal study of the etiology of delinquency and dropout (and the relationships between delinquency and dropout), Elliott and Voss (1974) conclude:

- School-related variables are the strongest predictors of dropout and delinquency for both males and females; in addition, girls who feel unsupported at home ("parental rejection") are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior.

- Contrary to popular view, delinquency appears to decline among young people who drop out of school, particularly if they assume adult roles in marriage and employment. Delinquency continues to increase for young people who remain in school under conditions of failure and alienation. Delinquency and dropout, the authors argue, are in important ways *alternative* responses to difficulties in school.

These and related findings reported in *Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies* may surprise those who have relied upon large-scale studies of school effects (Coleman, et al., 1966; Jencks, 1972) to infer that schools exhibit few differences in their effects on student achievement or behavior and to infer that changing schools will make only minimal difference in those student outcomes. A recent review by Rutter et al. (1979), offers this observation:

- A major point about the large-scale surveys is that they examined a very narrow range of school variables. The main focus was on resources, as reflected in items like the average expenditure per pupil, number of books in the school library and teacher-pupil ratio . . . these rather concrete variables say nothing about a whole range of school features which might influence children's behavior and attainments. As Jencks et al. (1972) themselves pointed out, they "ignored not only attitudes and values but the internal life of schools" (pp. 4-5).

It is precisely this internal life of schools that has been examined and found consequential to delinquency.

School organization is not the single cause of delinquent behavior. All troublesome behavior cannot be avoided by designing schools properly. However, school forces are powerful and have been generally ignored in delinquency prevention programs. The evidence is powerful enough to justify the attempt at program implementation.

In sum, *the school is a relevant and appropriate focus of intervention partly and most importantly because certain of its practices contribute unintentionally but systematically to troublesome behavior both in and out of school.*

2.2 Intended Benefits Of Selective Organizational Change

School personnel who are attracted to the proposed approach are likely to seek in these ideas and strategies a *range of desirable results:* reduction in troublesome behavior, improved learning, enhanced satisfaction or morale of students and staff, and strengthened relations with parents and community. Thus, while this approach affords a promising avenue to delinquency prevention, it does not suffer the stigma that so often is attached to programs begun solely as delinquency programs.

2.2.1 Reduction of Troublesome Behavior

Schools that have implemented change activities have observed a decrease in the incidence of troublesome behavior. The more fundamental the change, i.e., the more those changes tap dimensions of school life thought to be implicated in delinquency,the more dramatic the effects appear to be. At trouble-ridden Cleveland High School in Seattle, where violence, vandalisem, high dropout rates, and massive absenteeism were severe problems, changes ranged from improving the physical appearance of the school to redrafting and simplifying school rules and revising the grading policy. eporting the effects of these changes, Howard (pp. 30-31, 1978) observes:

- The average percentage of pupils absent each period decreased from 35 percent to 5.6 percent.
- Requests for transfers out of Cleveland dropped dramatically.
- The number of fights, both between individuals and between racial groups decreased markedly.
- Office referrals dropped by 50 percent.

- Discilpline problems in the school declined to such an extent that security officers were no longer assigned to the school while it was in session. Also, staff no longer had to patrol halls, supervise washrooms, or monitor the cafeteria.

- Outsiders coming into the school to sell drugs or otherwise cause trouble were still a problem. However, Cleveland students were informing outsiders that they were not welcome and told them to stay out of the building.

- Previously, anyone in a uniform coming into the school was subjected to threats and insults. This changed such that military recruiters and uniformed police could visit the building regularly with no no serious problems.

In case studies performed as part of the National Institute of Education study summarized in a report to Congress in 1978, "turn-around" schools incorporated changes in curriculum, in rules and governance arrangements, and in the role and practices of administrators as part of attempts to return troubled schools to safe, orderly, and productive places (NIE, 1978).

Desegregated schools in Springfield, Massachusetts, observed reductions in absenteeism and in office disciplianary referrals following an in-service program directed at changes in routine practices and policies (Alschuler,1978).

2.2.2. Improvement of Student Achievement

Over the years, the attraction to school improvement and the interest in organizational change as a major strategy have been tied to hopes for increased student achievement. Much of the literature on the alternative education movement assumes that greater achievement for more students will result from more diverse organizational arrangements, tied more closely to students' and teachers' preferred styles of learning and teaching and to opportunities for student and staff influence in the content and methods of classroom work.

In the widely publicized "Eight Year Study" conducted in the 1930's (Jennings and Nathan, 1977) graduates of several experimental schools were found to be strikingly more successful. The experimental schools were those that incorporated features consistent with our underlying assumptions here; the use of interdisciplinary, problem-solving curricula, extensive learning opportunities in the community, students teaching other students, and student and faculty influence in school governance. Twenty years after graduation, students from these schools were still more successful than students from schools whose organization offered only limited opportunities for students

to gain and demonstrate diverse competencies, to belong, and to be useful. The lessons of that study have yet to be incorporated on any meaningful scale.

At Cleveland High School, where organizational changes were made at first simply to get the school under control, improvements in academic performance followed; by the end of the third year, the number of Cleveland's graduates enrolling in college had increased from thirty-five percent ot sixty percent (Howard, 1978).

2.2.3 Improvement of Relationships of Schools with Parents and the Community

Without being so naive as to say that parents and communities will support any well-intended school changes or that the community even learns of all school changes, it was observed that the turn-around schools (National Institute of Education, 1977) enjoyed an improved image in the community and greater parental support.

2.2.4 Strengthening of Overall Program Quality

School administrators are constantly under pressure to upgrade the quality of the school program. The strategies advocated here are expected to address immediate and highly visible problems associated with discilpline and achievememt, but they also address the more constant and persistent demands associated with overall school improvement. Although measurements of improved quality have not typically been incorporated in evaluation designs for delinquency prevention programs, the intended program benefits in these broader areas may increase the attraction of this approach to school personnel.

2.2.5 Continuity of Effort

Organizational improvement relies upon insiders who provide continuity and can develop into a cadre of practitioner consultants who can assist other schools to initiate a comparable approach.

In Colorado, twenty-eight schools interested in school climate improvement have joined in a League of Cooperating Schools.[1] which offers an opportunity to expand the number and range of low-cost, potentially high-impact efforts at school improvement. The league offers limited and informal collegial support, opportunities for professional contact and reflection, distribution of relevant materials, informal and occasional consultant resources, and other forms of assistance in an effort to stimulate and sustain school improvement activities. Members of the league are schools; participants are school principals, i.e.,persons in a position to initiate change activities in schools.

Tactics applied by the schools have required commitments of time and political and administrative support but little direct outlay of funds. In most cases, schools have sought gradual and incremental change, expecting to witness positive changes over a two- to three-year period.

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[1]The League has been sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education, under the active leadership of Mr. Eugene Howard, Director of CDE's School Improvement and Leadership Services Unit. Beginning in the fall of 1979, CDE and the Colorado Division of Justice (state planning agency) cosponsored a project of delinquency prevention through pilot programs of school climate improvement in Colorado secondary schools; information about the project can be obtained from William Van Buskirk, Project Director, CDE. Similar prospects for continuity are present in school-based programs in delinquency prevention in Vermont, where the focus in at least three of four sites has been on collaborative work to expand teachers' classroom practices.

3. PROGRAM OF SELECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN SCHOOLS

This section presents the guiding assumptions that govern program design and operation and the key features that distinguish a program of organizational change from other methods of delinquency prevention.

3.1 Guiding Assumptions

Programs to change or improve behavior carry certain assumptions about what influences behavior. Often these assumptions go unstated; discussions are held about this or that program without statements being made on why a particular program idea is expected to lead to desired results. The program of organizational change proposed here has three central assumptions, made explicit here so that specific program ideas in local schools can be tied to stated understanding about what is desirable and practicable. These assumptions are reflected in the set of program opportunities discussed in Appendix A.

3.1.1 Assumption 1

Delinquency and other troublesome behavior will be prevented or reduced when young people become more assured of opportunities to demonstrate competence and worth, to be useful, to belong, and to be seen favorably by themselves and others. This project is aimed at enhancing such opportunities.

The assumption is grounded in three theoretical perspectives, and is supported by a substantial body of empirical research. These theories are outlined below and discussed more fully in *Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies.*

- Bonding and Control Theories: Maintain that most people stay out of trouble most of the time because they are bonded to society's norms through their affiliations at home, school, workplace, and church. If these ties remain strong, an individual is likely to conform to the rules. Hirschi (1969) described four control processes that support conformity:

  - *Commitment* refers to a person's having interests that misconduct would jeopardize, i.e., a stake in conventional activities that could be lost as a result of rule-breaking. The stake includes both a desirable position at present and a realistic promise of such positions in the near future.

  - A second control process is *attachment* to other people. To violate a norm is to violate the wishes and expectations of others; a low level of attachment makes violation more likely.

- *Involvement* in conventional activities refers to one's present investment of time and energy in the activity. Only some involvements serve as controls on behavior. Hirschi found watching television, engaging in sports, and reading magazines to be unrelated to delinquent behavior, whereas doing homework was associated with lower delinquency, even when classroom grades were considered.

- The fourth control process is *belief* in the moral validity of social rules. Commitment and involvement in home and school is strongly connected to respect for the law.

Note that these arguments are not nearly as simple as "the devil finds work for idle hands;" simply keeping young persons busy has not been shown to reduce delinquent behavior. The fundamental issue is whether an organized activity provides a *social stake*, a desirable position that could be lost--that is the basis for involvement, for attachment to others, and for belief in the moral validity of prevailing rules.

- Strain and Opportunity Theories: State that, in our society, the same goals tend to be held out to everyone as desirable. However, a problem arises because legitimate avenues for achieving those goals are not open equally to all. The combination of similarity of goals and inequality of opportunity makes it impossible for some people to obey the rules and still achieve those goals. Consequently, some turn to illegitimate, sometimes delinquent, means to achieve these goals. Others may reject both the goals and the means and retreat socially, either by removing themselves physically or by using alcohol and drugs. Others may engage in ritual conformity, accepting the means but rejecting or abandoning the goals. Others may rebel, rejecting both the goals and the means and substituting new ones.

- Labeling Theory: Describes how attaching negative or derogatory descriptions to persons affects their situation and behavior. Some persons, by virtue of race, class, or ethnicity, may be particularly subject to such labeling. Negative assessments of *acts* (Janey or Johnny broke a window) become negative descriptions of *persons* (Janey or Johnny is a delinquent) and their prospects for success. People react to the label as much as to the behavior of those labeled. Trouble is expected, productivity is not, and the *opportunities for bonding to conventional activities and actors are diminished.* The probability of delinquent behavior is increased.

Organizational improvement programs are intended to reduce delinquent behavior (1) by increasing opportunities for bonding and commitment to conventional behavior, (2) by providing greater correspondence between goals and the legitimate means of attaining them, (3) by increasing interaction with groups supporting law-abiding behavior, and (4) by reducing negative labeling, or relabeling participants favorably. A useful image which ties all these aims together in *social legitimacy*, the chances for a youth to be--and to be seen as--useful, competent, belonging, and influential. In brief, the organizational change approach is intended to create school situations in which delinquency-producing forces are reduced and supports for law-abiding behavior are increased.

3.1.2 Assumption 2

The school is a principal arena in which young people learn socially legitimate behavior. In accordance with this assumption, this program is located in *public schools*, and is intended to affect the mainstream opportunities in those schools.

3.1.3 Assumption 3

The opportunities for influence positive behavior are largely a matter of organizational arrangement. Schools can be arranged differently, with little or no increase in cost, to offer a greater range of opportunities to a greater number of students. In accordance with this assumption, this paper advocates a strategy of organizational change or school improvement.

Selective organizational change in schools requires a variety of adjustments in *mainstream* policies and practices of an entire school, including:

- Adjustments in the way values are described and emphasized in schools, calling for reduced emphasis on competition and increased emphasis on participation in cooperative endeavors; less emphasis on a narrow array of high-status work occupations and a more balanced emphasis on the variety of occupations necessary to society; less emphasis on narrow academic skills and pursuits and a more balanced emphasis on practical skills, work, and relevant community affairs; less reliance on standard materials and course descriptions reflecting a single viewpoint, and greater efforts to reflect pluralism in course design and materials.

- Adjustments in curriculum, to provide more organized educational support for the study and practice of work, for the study of and involvement in community affairs, for mastery of practical competencies needed by all; for participation in cooperative ventures; and for knowledge and acceptance of diverse views and experiences (pluralism).

- Adjustments in the classification and sorting of students, which affect bonding, opportunity, and labeling. Here, adjustments are needed in school tracking policies and practices, in the organization of prerequisites, and in the use of academic performance as an entrance criterion for extra-curricular activities. Some of these sorting practices are aggravated by often unintended but nevertheless systematic reactions to artifacts of class, race, and ethnicity.

- Adjustments in school governance, including expansion of student participation as planners, developers, instructors, aides, and in other responsible roles in the school; and work to assure that systems of discipline are, and are seen as, legitimate, fair, consistent, and clear.

- Expansion of typical classroom practices to permit greater participation in cooperative work; modification or strengthening of instructional practices in ways that insure student success and build satisfying teacher-student and student-peer relationships.

The *strengths* of the organizational change approach, are its consistency with the most promising delinquency prevention theory, its applicability to mainstream interests and practices in education, its low cost, and its adaptability to diverse but ordinary school circumstances. The *difficulties* of the approach are its relative unfamiliarity to school personnel and prospective outside partners, its apparent complexity and difficulty in comparison to self-contained treatment programs, the indirectness of effects on student behavior, and the time required (one to three years) to witness substantial schoolwide effects on problem behavior.

3.2 Targets of Delinquency Prevention Initiatives in Schools

Even where persons have recognized the role played by organizational arrangements in contributing to failure and to troublesome behavior, they have typically organized programs of individual remediation. The mixmatch between a view of organizational causes and a remedy of individual treatments is reflected in the habitual definition of program targets as persons or groups. The program being proposed here, however, takes a somewhat different view of a program target, and is qualitatively different from the typical self-contained program of remediation or treatment. If troublesome behavior can be traced in large part to the influence of school practices of classification and selection, governance and discipline, evaluation and crediting of work, and so forth, then in effect two targets are defined for intervention: school policies and practices contributing to delinquent behavior, and those students who are subject to the practices.

The primary targets are school policies and practices that contribute in unintended but systematic ways to troublesome behavior. Those areas that appear most problematic are teacher-student interaction (in and out of classrooms), practices of rulemaking and rule enforcement, the nature of the curriculum, and students' access to the curriculum through classification, selection, and placement. *Changes* in those routine policies and practices that make it possible for more students to belong, to gain and demonstrate competence and to be useful will result in fewer incidents of disruption, absenteeism, dropout, vandalism, and other troublesome behavior.

The secondary targets are those students who are subject to the negative influence of routine school arrangements. Students are not at risk because of personal characteristics, but are *placed at risk* by certain school policies and practices. In some respects, all students are legitimate targets of a delinquency prevention initiative. But certain groups of students are more at risk than others and are thus more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Students assigned to curriculum tracks for "dummies" are demonstrably at risk by virtue of such assignment. Similarly at risk are students who, because of eligibility criteria governing extracurricula offerings (e.g., athletics) are denied opportunities to gain and demonstrate competence in school. Students may also be at risk whose family background, style of talking, way of interacting with adults, or past record of behavior in school has influenced their interactions with teachers. Although school organization is the immediate and principal target of this experimental program, efforts to improve the school may involve and affect the behavior of those students most adversely affected.

Using the crude indicators of dropout, truancy, disciplinary referrals, or reported instances of drug or alcohol abuse, the range of student population judged at risk may run from five to fifty percent. By adding those students not demonstrably involved in troublesome behavior but nonetheless affected by track placement, repeated failure, differential enforcement of rules, and so forth, the estimate can be expanded.

By defining the at risk population using the levels of droupout, unexcused absence, classroom disruption, and other problems a target population is tapped that is considerably larger than that routinely tapped by service or treatment programs. The degree to which this target is influenced will be revealed in the evaluation of behavioral effects over a period of months and years.

3.3 An Organizational Perspective

In applying the organizational approach to delinquency prevention, clarification of the difference between two perspectives--the individual and the organizational--will be of help. These perspectives govern the way that people view and talk about situations, define problems, analyze causes, and seek improvements or solutions.

The individual perspective seeks explanations for the way things are going in the motives, characteristics, backgrounds, and abilities of individuals or groups. Underlying this perspective is the assumption that things go right or wrong because of the strengths or deficiencies that people bring with them to school. When things go right the individuals are celebrated; when things go wrong it is believed that reforming or replacing the individuals will bring improvement. Teachers ask that troublesome students be removed from classes; students hope that certain teachers will quit, retire, or be transferred. Remedial classes, in-school suspensions, counseling, and parent conferences are all attempts to improve a situation by applying an individual perspective.

The organizational perspective seeks explanations for how things are going in the school (shared expectations, rules and regulations, policies, and practices) to distinguish schools from other social situations. Presumably, everyone knows what school is like. Yet typically, students and staff alike find the organization of the school somewhat mysterious. Observations or complaints include talk about "the system" or "they." There is no shared set of ideas or vocabulary for talking about the school as an organization and about the effect that organization has on the experiences, attitudes, and behavior of the people who spend their days in school.

In one project sponsored by the University of Massachusetts and conducted in the schools of Springfield, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut, staff relied on the concept of literacy to introduce school personnel to an organizational perspective and to assist them in practicing and applying that perspective (Alschuler, 1976; 1978). The literacy analogy was described this way:

> . . . literacy is more than simply learning to read and write the conventional idiom. It is a much broader problem solving process involving *naming* problems, *analyzing* the causes, and acting to *solve* the problems. For instance, quantity is a fundamental aspect of reality. In math classes students learn the *names* for different quantities (numbers) and how to *analyze* basic relationships between these quantities (more than, less than, included in). They also learn ways of *solving* problems, (multiplication, division, subtraction, addition, raising to a power, solving equations, etc.). Not only can students play with numbers divorced from reality, they can apply these names, analytic methods and problem-solving methods to reality. They are literate with numbers every time they *name* the reality of their bank account balance, *analyze* the upcoming additions and subtactions, and *solve* a financial problem by either saving or spending. Without this basic numeracy (being literate with numbers) we would be less powerful in solving all kinds of problems from carpentry to planning more adequate transportation facilities using census data. Numeracy is powerful. So is chemical literacy, physical literacy, biological literacy. All grant the literate person with power to name, analyze, and solve problems (1976, pp. 1-2).

Organizational or situational literacy gives persons the power to understand and describe how situations affect the ways individuals think, feel, act, and relate to one another. When applying an individual perspective, people use notions like personality, background, innate ability or intelligence, motivation, and self-discipline to grasp what they see. When applying an organizational or situational perspective, several concepts are required to organize observations. Here are two:

First, schools like any social situation, are marked by *shared expectations* for what is appropriate, desirable, right, and proper. These expectations make up what everyone knows about going to school. In just getting through the day doing the best job they can, most simply take these shared expectations for granted. By applying an organizational perspective, these expectations will be scrutinized, making them visible and explicit. One asks which expectations contribute to a productive, orderly, satisfying, and safe learning experience for all people in school and which contribute (unintentionally) to failure, alienation, and dissatisfaction for some people that may be reflected in troublesome behavior. For example, one widely shared expectation is that it is difficult to learn if one is constantly afraid of being struck from behind. The expectation that students and staff should behave in civil ways and should refrain from assulting one another in a reasonable expectation to hold. However, schools are also typically arranged to reflect the shared expectation that students will learn better if some levels of achievement (pace of learning, style of learning) are acknowledged as successes and some levels are labeled as failures. The expectation that schools should sort children into winners and losers is not so clearly related to maintaining a productive, satisfying, and civil environment for learning; the emerging relation between failure and alienation in school and troublesome behavior suggests that these expectations need examination.

Second, these expectations are reflected in a variety of formal and informal routine, established organizational arrangements; rules and procedures; policies governing attendance, curriculum, evaluation of progress, discipline, credits, and so forth; and habitual practices of teaching, learning, and social interaction. Because these arrangements are so routine and so taken-for-granted, they may take on a kind of legitimacy just because they exist: "That's the way things are."

Applying an organizational perspective requires that one examine the routine policies and practices of school life, asking what expectations they reflect and whether those expectations are in fact desirable. This will not be an easy undertaking; if the pitfalls in common practice were so readily apparent, persons in schools would have already discovered them. But they are not so apparent, partly because any one practice may serve a variety of purposes and reflect several, sometimes contradictory, expectations for the way school should be. For example, testing and grading are intended as evaluators of student progress and teacher effectiveness. But they may be used to make decisions about appropriate

course placement; they may be used by employers to judge a student's potential worth as an employee; they may be used by parents as evidence about a son's or daughter's progress; and they may be used to decide eligibility for co-curricular activities. Some of the purposes served by testing and grading reflect the expectation that regular tests of competency will help both student and teacher to determine next steps, and thus will enhance learning. Testing and grading reflect the expectation that students should not be permitted to gain and demonstrate worth and competence in sports or in a work setting unless they have already demonstrated competence in areas of cognitive learning.

It is difficult to quarrel with the argument that teachers, students, and parents need some understandable description of competence in a particular area of instruction. But it is not clear that prospects for future learning are improved by converting such a description into a label (he's a D student) that then governs access to activities such as sports, school clubs, and work opportunities. Evaluating student progress is intended to support learning, but appears also to contribute to troublesome behavior. In applying an organizational perspective, those involved will need to ask what arrangements for evaluation can be supported that will continue to enhance learning and what problematic arrangements might be modified or eliminated.

Underlying the organizational perspective, then, is the assumption that things go wrong or right largely because of the strengths or weaknesses in the expectations shared for what school is and should be, and in the strengths and weaknesses in the ways school is organized to realize those expectations. When things go right, individuals can be given credit for their efforts to organize deliberately for a productive, satisfying, orderly, challenging school--a good school. When things go wrong, reforming the organization (without blaming individuals or groups) will bring improvement.

Drawing from the work of Alschuler and his associates, (Alschuler, et al., 1976, p. 17) a reasonable and effective approach is proposed in this report that concentrates on organizational targets for change: Roles, and not the people who inhabit them; misguided goals, rather than the people who advocate them; unnecessary and oppressive rules, not the rule-enforcers; troublesome practices, not the practitioners; inappropriate policies, not the policymakers; and undersirable norms, not the normal people who act them out.

In turning around Cleveland High School, Principal Bill Maynard encouraged administrators and teachers to consider the rationale and enforceability of prevailing rules and disciplinary procedures. Did rules offer the opportunity to learn and to teach responsibility for the health, safety, dignity, and material goods of others? Or did they proliferate to cover in detail an endless series of possible contingencies, leaving

few opportunities to explore the nature of responsible action and leading to fruitless wrangling in what Maynard refers to as the game of "Gotcha." In this light, then, it made more sense to question whether a rule against wearing hats made sense in the first place than to train teachers in confrontation tactics with hat-wearing students (Maynard, 1978).[1]

Similarly, in a Springfield, Massachusetts, school, it made more sense to change the afternoon bus schedule by five minutes than to coax more teachers to patrol halls and to punish more students for running through the hallways on the way to catch the bus (Alschuler, 1979).

Although these examples may appear simple and have simple solutions, they illustrate efforts to look to the *situation*, rather than to individual offenders, for definitions of a problem and suggestions for a solution. Using the same perspective, schools have tackled tough issues of grading, curriculum, basic rules and disciplinary procedures, and governance. The superintendent of the Salt Lake City schools, Don Thomas, instituted a system of shared governance that extends from the building level to the superintendent's office; the system is a deliberate attempt to increase the attention paid to organizational improvement and to expand the influence of teachers and parents in school operations.[2] Bill Maynard did not stop at cosmetic changes in Cleveland High School, but went to work on revamping of basic rules (reduced to six)[3] and the grading policy (eliminating F's).[4] Chicago's Ridgwood High School opened with an explicit

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[1] In this instance, the stated rationale for the rule was that it permitted administrators to detect the presence of strangers in the school (presumably strangers wear hats). The rule became a source of friction between teachers and students, however, because black students in the school considered hats a mark of group identify.

[2] From a speech at the Collegial Associates for the Development and Renewal of Educators (CADRE) 1979 annual meeting.

[3] Cleveland High School (Seattle, Washington) Discipline Code: (1) Attend class; (2) No alcohol or drugs; (3) No weapons; (4) No gambling; (5) No smoking in the building; (6) Treat all with respect for their dignity, welfare, and material goods (Howard, 1978).

[4] Only credits which a pupil has earned are listed on the transcript. Students are rewarded for the amount of work they do. They may earn 1/4 credit, 1/2 credit, 3/4 credit or full credit, and may receive a grade of A, B, C, or D. Recently a teacher-student task force completed a new grading process. Each teacher may choose a grading style that best fits his teaching style. The four styles are: (1) A, B, C, D, no credit; (2) A, B, pass, no credit; (3) Pass, no credit; (4) Mastery--a check list based on levels of performance skills (Howard, 1978).

statement of organizational expectations and the way organizational arrangements would support them. The statement covers eleven areas, from diversity in student needs and interests, to curriculum design, to use of community opportunities and resources to pupil and staff involvement in decision making. School improvement projects, including changes in policy and practice were to be judged by administration, faculty, and students for their consistency with the guiding expectations.

Figure 3-1 illustrates the distinction between an individual perspective and an organizational perspective using typical guiding quiestions, assumptions, explanations, solutions, and likely effects.

An organizational perspective is argued here to guide interpretations of a problem and to determine a concentration of resources for solving problems. Of course, schools should not tolerate assults and students who are failing badly should not be ignored; some circumstances and behavior of individuals may continue to demand attention while overall efforts at school improvement are being designed and mounted. However, other circumstances and behavior can in fact be ignored, treated less seriously, or managed in self-contained programs.[1]

3.3.1 Difficulties in Applying an Organizational Perspective.

As a practical matter, applying an organizational perspective will be difficult at first. First, people are typically not very practiced at thinking in organizational terms and will slip easily into an individual interpretation.

Second, organizations are in fact complex. As the testing and grading example showed, any single practice may serve a variety of purposes, some more desirable or admirable than others. Changes sought in one practice or policy may have unanticipated and unwanted effects on other policies or practices.

And, finally, habit is powerful. A familiar evil may be more attractive than the risk of the unknown. The very routineness of social interactions and arrangements is generally a strength; it enables people to get through the day with some degree of smoothness and predictability. School life will proceed on Thrusday much the way it proceeded on Tuesday; the organization can maintain itself in the face of numerous small pressures and occasional crises. Yet these routines and the implicit faith that things will go on the way they have in the past render the

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[1] For a discussion of school-based programs of delinquency prevention that are limited in scale and organized in accordance with promising delinquency prevention principles, see Johnson, Cohen and Bird (1979).

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVE

"What characteristics of *people* lead them to act in troublesome ways?"

Typical Explanations

"Students who can't read would rather fight than risk humiliation in class."

"White, middle-class teachers can't understand the backgrounds, interests, and needs of minority students."

"Students are a problem when they don't learn self-discipline in the home."

"TV makes everything look too easy--kids don't have any motivation to study hard."

Typical Assumptions

Individual behavior is produced largely by individual characteristics, qualities, and backgrounds.

Problem behavior can be traced to "deficiencies" in individual children.

Problem behavior can be corrected through treatment or services provided to individual students.

Problem behavior of students can be corrected by replacing or reforming teachers.

Typical Solutions

Suspension and expulsion of students; termination and transfer of teachers.

In-school suspension or other punishment to make clear the consequences of misbehavior.

Remedial classes to improve basic academic skills.

Teacher evaluation conferences to convey the need for greater understanding.

Individual counseling to adjust students to the realities of school life.

Typical Effects
(Individual effects are expected)

Reduced incidence of trouble by participating students.*

Improved academic performance by some participating students.

Higher morale among teachers who have had troublesome students removed from their classes.

Reduced office referrals by some teachers.

*There is some evidence that negative labeling or stigma that follows individual treatment may produce an *increase* in troublesome behavior and an increase in dropout rates.

Figure 1-1. Individual and Organizational Perspectives in Looking at Problem Behavior in Schools (Page 1 of 2)

ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

"What characteristics of the *school situation* lead people to act in troublesome ways?"

Typical Explanations

"If you're not in the college prep curriculum here you don't count. Kids who aren't in college prep have no stake in doing well."

"The long list of rules in this school places kids and teachers in an adversary relationship."

"The way we assign kids to classes here labels whole groups of kids as dummies."

"The way time is scheduled, students have no chance to seek help from teachers."

"The way time is scheduled, teachers have no chance for professional conversation with other teachers."

"The eligibility rules for sports mean that some kids have almost no chance to demonstrate their worth and talent."

Typical Assumptions

Organizational arrangements can contribute to problem behavior by individual students or staff.

Problem behavior can be prevented or reduced by changing some of the organizational arrangements.

Individual behavior is powerfully influenced and created by what going to school is like.

Typical Solutions

Create an informal faculty forum for discussion of professional issues, with no expectation for decisions, action, or faculty meeting business.

Modify student options and access to offer more opportunities for more students to demonstrate worth and competence.

Negotiate a time schedule that includes an activity period during the day, for greater participation in extracurricular activities and greater chance for informal student-staff contact.

Modify the grading policy to award credit for work accomplished, but to eliminate discrediting through F's.

Reduce the number of rules to those basic to a civil, safe, orderly society.

Typical Effects
(Schoolwide effects are expected)

Fewer office referrals.

Fewer fights.

Higher completion and lower dropout rates.

Fewer complaints by teachers.

Increased attendance.

Improved academic performance.

Less vandalism.

Figure 1-1. Individual and Organizational Perspectives in Looking at Problem Behavior in Schools (Page 2 of 2)

organizational shape and tone of a school almost invisible. Bringing a school's organizational character to light--opening up expectations and practices to scrutiny--will require the concerted effort of an interested group of people inside the school with a stake in making things better. In Chapters 4-9 an implementation sequence is described that should make early attempts at organizational analysis manageable by placing a strategy or organizational change within reach.

3.4 The Project as an Experiment

Based on theory, research, and practical experience. school improvement is considered to be a promising strategy of delinquency prevention. Yet, by comparison to other strategies, organizational change is relatively untested and its effects, particularly on troublesome behavior, are largely undocumented. Without a history of practical application and careful evaluations, designers of new projects have little advice to draw upon. To advance the knowledge and practice of delinquency prevention, and to advance the practice of educational change will require experimentation. It will not be clear at the outset what organizational targets will exert the greatest leverage on delinquent behavior or what tactics of organizational change will prove most durable. For this reason, the program has been designed as a partnership between outside groups and local public schools. The anticipation is that partners will assume joint responsibility for preserving an experimental stance toward the work, for adhering to guiding principles, and for documenting emerging effects. The experimental nature of this venture renders the place of documentation and evaluation particularly critical. It is uncertain what will work, what the developments and consequences will be, to what extent local circumstances will place boundaries on or create resources for change, how much time will be required before changes are seen in rates of troublesome behavior, and so forth. The evaluation design described in chapter IX takes into account the need to examine conditions and determinants of change (i.e., process evaluation) and to judge progress on a range of intended outcomes (i.e., impact evaluation).

3.5 Change Through Partnership

Because the school is a relevant and appropriate setting for a focus on delinquency prevention, initiatives using strategies of selective organizational change in local schools should be organized. Such a program would be consonant with the most promising delinquency theory, but has been largely untried and untested. Although the initiative carries substantial promise, it is also expected to prove difficult and complex. Readings in the area of organizational change in schools (Goodlad, 1975; Tye and Novotney, 1975; Sarason, 1971; Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein, 1971), experience with school climate improvement in Colorado during 1979 and 1980 and observation of delinquency prevention programs in Vermont schools, all indicate that most schools will require assistance in translating these ideas into practice.

Thus, this project is organized around a proposed partnership approach to initiating and sustaining selective organizational changes in schools. The sequence of change described in the following chapters of this paper assumes a partnership between school personnel and outside groups. The partnership idea is revised to accommodate the first stages of change that are guided largely by a group of insiders under the sponsorship and with the support and participation of the school principal.

3.6 Summary

This approach to delinquency prevention in schools has the following major features:

- It is located in public elementary and secondary schools as a program of school improvement that seeks to change the powerful mainstream practices and policies that influence delinquent behavior thus having a major influence on the lives of the young.

- It is a program of organizational change. Administrators, teachers, and students may be involved in specific programs to revise school rules and disciplinary procedures, to improve student-teacher interactions, to reconsider eligibility criteria for some courses or extracurricular activities, to design and implement new programs for student involvement in work or community service, to modify peer group interactions, to design more relevant course offerings or course materials, and so forth.

- It is experimental. First, records will be kept on the ability of the technical assistance partnership to stimulate school-based delinquency prevention efforts and on the conditions and processes most conducive to successful implementation. Second, the behavior of participating students will be observed and the program's effect on school-wide incidence of troublesome behavior will be recorded.

4. AN IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE: OVERVIEW

In the pages that follow, change is conceived and presented in five stages. By presenting the work of organizational change in "stages," we naturally leave the impression that it is linear--that it moves from "selection" to "negotiation" to "design" and "implementation" and finally to "evaluation" and "institutionalization." To some extent, that picture is realistic. Persons will have to have an idea in mind before they can test it; assessing the local situation (i.e., understanding present practices and policies) should precede proposals for changing practices and policies. Yet in practice, many parts of this work will be interwoven and will take on the appearance of recurring *aspects* of change rather than stages of change; the descriptions presented here may contribute more to an *analysis of tactics* than to a script for action.

The first "stage," then, centers on the process by which working relationships are forged and agreements are formulated that permit shared work. The second "stage" highlights the requirement for describing and interpreting present practice before new practices are proposed or attempted. Program focus and design are the work of a third "stage," and tactics of implementation are treated as a fourth "stage." Documenting progress and evaluating effects, relevant tasks throughout the effort, are treated here as a fifth "stage" of implementation.

4.1 Stage One of the Implementation Sequence: Entering into Relationships with Local Schools

The first stage of work is focused on *preparing a setting* for change. A basic premise of this document is that people outside a school[1] will work in partnership with school personnel to stimulate changes in the school. Such partnerships are unusual. Schools are very familiar with outsiders sitting complacently or critically outside and spewing ideas which it is then the job of school people to translate into practice. Similarly, well-intentioned and concerned outsiders have had the experience of having their ideas entertained and even welcomed by schools, only to watch those same ideas turn into something unrecognizable in practice. For these reasons, the early stages of work have been designed to include recruitment and negotiation. By incorporating these stages of work in the organizational approach, the users can (1) take some steps to prevent the

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[1]This description assumes a program that is initiated by the state and that is organized around a testable set of ideas and a partnership approach with local schools. A parallel argument could be constructed for locally initiated ventures in which the collaboration resided entirely within a school (among teachers and administrators), or between individual schools and district sponsors, or between schools and other specialized sources of assistance.

erosion of some promising program principles, (2) protect the interests and respect the knowledge of school personnel who must seek a balance between what is desirable and what is possible, and (3) protect the interests of outside groups and enhance their ability to prevent delinquency through selective change in schools.

Stage one includes the following activities: (1) making decisions and reaching agreements among outside groups about the nature and scale of work to be attempted in partnership with local schools; (2) developing a list of potential schools; (3) negotiating with many potential schools to arrive at working agreements with a small number; and (4) organizing support within a school for an organizational change approach and accommodating resistance to the partnership, the program approach, or specific proposals for change.

4.1.1 Outcomes of Stage One

Three accomplishments mark the end of a first stage of work. First, negotiations among prospective partners will have led to a decision to proceed or to abandon the effort. Agreements to proceed, where reached, will call for joint work in which both local and state people, insiders and outsiders, will have active roles and in which the objectives are consistent with the program principles described in the invitation or prospectus used in recruitment.

Second, a group will have formed, the members of which will act as partners and colleagues in translating some promising ideas into manageable practice. Participants in the group should include those who are in a position to commit resources to action, those who are likely to influence the support of others, and those willing to try out the ideas in daily practice for a period of several months. On those grounds, the group can be expected to include:

- The principal or relevant assistant principals
- Interested teachers
- Selected department, grade level, or committee chairs
- Specialists, counselors or resource people whose knowledge and practice are specifically tied to the project at hand

This description of a core group will dissatisfy some because it appears too narrow, e.g., no parent or student involvement. It will seem too broad to others who fear that the demands on teachers' time and good will may lead them to compromise ideas without a fair and rigorous trial. Local circumstances will vary; generally, though, agreement to work in a school should be negotiated with persons who can influence the course of change, who will be called upon to commit time and other resources in the

early stages, and whose knowledge, skill, and confidence will be placed on the line as ideas are tested in practice. On this ground, agreement between a principal and a representative of the state planning agency is probably not sufficient; agreement by *all* teachers, the student council, and the PTA is probably overkill. Depending on local circumstances, other potentially relevant members of or consultants to the group may include:

- Students who are informally influential with other students, and/or students holding formal positions in student groups
- Parents participating in an advisory group, task force, volunteer program, or PTA-type group
- District specialists or other consultants
- Other teachers known to be informally influential with other teachers
- Experienced practitioners, e.g., principals, from schools where similar efforts have been conducted

Finally, a preliminary practicable work plan should be written. The work plan or statement of next steps, marks the end of the negotiation period and the initiation of actual joint work. The existence of a plan, even if loosely formulated, will help participants keep in mind that the method of school partnerships is a strategic device, not an end in itself. The desired ends, based on shared hopes for more satisfying, productive, healthy, and safe schools and communities, are: less dropout, delinquent activity, disruption, truancy, violence, and vandalism; more students and adults speaking favorably of school and their experiences there; more demonstrable competence in teaching and learning; and greater integration of young people into community.

All in all, the negotiation stage should produce agreement to work (which is not necessarily agreement on a program) by a group that represents the smallest arena of influence required to initiate change, with some reasonable prospects of generating broader support in subsequent stages.

4.1.2 Activities in Stage One

During Stage One, prospective sponsors will decide on the focus and scale of the intended effort, will prepare a statement of the ideas to be explored and the proposed partnership arrangement, will recruit and negotiate with interested schools, and will confirm agreements to work collaboratively in selected school sites. By the end of Stage One, partnerships with schools should have been formed and a more detailed development of program plans should begin.

4.1.3 Decide on the Scale of the Effort

Judgements about the potential scale of the venture require decisions about money, priorities, staff time, staff roles. In some schools, state-level staff will act as sponsors but not as active partners of work: in other schools state staff will invest considerable time and energy in a partnership or technical assistance capacity (Beville, Bird, and Croan, 1979). The intended role(s) and the nature of support (money, technical assistance, etc.) should be made clear in initial invitations to schools. Generally, the advice about scale is start small by limiting the number of participating schools and encouraging modest objectives derived from theory.

The *focus and general design of the work should be clearly stated.*[1] The problems are important but complex, the approach is largely untried and untested, the effects sought are indirect and the progress of the partnership is likely to be uneven. In that light, it appears that the ability of the partners to preserve theoretical principles, to implement a defensible program design and to generate practical advice will rest on their ability to (1) focus their efforts on some selected aspects of school life; and (2) enter into collegial working relationships that permit the description and critique of practice at some level of precision.

4.1.4 Preparing for Recruitment of Local Schools

Preparation requires two steps: Agreement among sponsoring groups on guidelines for selection and the preparation of a prospectus or other written invitation to potential schools.

The prospectus is a short statement of those ideas that the sponsor wishes to participate in testing, and the conditions under which a test is sought. By circulating such a statement, sponsors can discover a pool of potential sites by asking schools to declare interest; only in subsequent negotiation, however, will sponsors discover the range of favorable circumstances and the shape of particular local initiatives.

- Before recruiting local schools, outside groups must reach agreements on the nature and extent of the program, on rough guidelines and procedures for selection of schools, and on appropriate and inappropriate compromises with program principles.

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[1] In their four-year study of change projects, the Rand Corporation discovered that change efforts that were viewed by teachers as difficult and challenging were more likely to be successful (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978).

- A written program announcement or prospectus, circulated to schools, school district administrators, school board members, university departments of education, and staff of the state department of education is the first step in generating interest in this sort of initiative. Where promising contacts have already been established with schools, circulation of the prospectus should be accompanied by a phone call or visit.

- The prospectus should describe, in about ten pages, the guiding ideas, the aspirations for a partnership, and the procedures for entering into a negotiation. Work to eliminate the professional jargon of either delinquency prevention or education, relying on "conventional" English to state ideas and to give examples.

- Selective organizational change should be stressed as a strategy for dealing with school-related problems (delinquency, dropout, violence and vandalism, classroom disruption); that is, during preliminary screening the impression should be avoided that outside groups are willing to support any plan that anyone thinks will resolve those difficulties.

- Responses to the prospectus will all require follow-up. However, not all candidate schools require visits and negotiation periods. Some candidates can be screened out through phone calls in which it becomes apparent that present circumstances or local aspirations for the partnership are not consistent with the outside groups' aspirations and intents. To make follow-up phone calls serve a screening purpose, they should be used as much as possible to *collect* information; there is a limit to how much can be explained about the partnership approach without understanding the local conditions and perspectives that prompted the inquiry in the first place. One effective method of further screening is to request from sites a concept paper reflecting their understanding of and proposed approach to the work.

In the recruitment activities that follow distribution of the prospectus, it will be easy and tempting to slip from the tone taken in the prospectus and to begin persuading school personnel that "we have a good thing and you ought to join up." The key to the recruitment activity is to remember that it is not geared toward persuasion but toward a *fair assessment of prospects*. Some circumstances described below will make that stance a challenge to sustain.

The recruitment-partnership approach is unfamiliar. In proposing ideas for joing work, sponsors will be engaging in activities and relationships that do not match the conventional arrangements for categorical, grant-funded programs in which all elements of program design are developed before support is awarded. There may be several consequences of this:

- It may be harder to select among competing sites in the absence of clear program designs; judgments will need to be made on the basis of appropriate and promising settings, rather than on program descriptions.

- Recruitees may not know what questions will be relevant or how to clarify potential activities, roles and relationships, demands, and so forth. Sponsors may have to take the initiative in posing questions or eliciting questions based on what they know or suspect about the way the partnership will proceed.

Schools are already familiar with visiting consultants, experts, specialists, innovators, university professors, government bureaucrats, community organizers, and aggressive parents. One observer of life in schools has commented that the outsider will be a member of an unfortunately familiar group to whom the probable response will be "here we go again" (Sarason, 1971).

Approaching a school with a proposal to enter into joint work places the burden of ideas on the outsider, who very quickly will be asked, "What's your idea for a program?" Such a question raises some very real dilemmas, the solution to which is by no means certain. On the one hand, sponsors should command an array of examples of practical opportunities that (1) preserve the intended principles and (2) reflect familiarity with the realities of school life. Clarity and specificity about possible directions appear to contribute to administrators' and teachers' willingness to proceed. On the other hand, by suggesting possible directions, sponsors risk distracting attention from agreement on the key principles and toward a (premature) discussion about whether the illustrative approaches are desirable or feasible. Outside sponsors face a situation in which they must sustain commitment to a particular set of compelling and testable ideas, while demonstrating their familiarity with (and ability to adapt to) actual school realities. In one project, the problem was resolved in part by hiring a school principal as coordinator of a statewide pilot project of school change. Principals and teachers have also been used as consultants to organizational change projects, in an effort to establish the balance between guiding ideas and local adaptations.

4.1.5 Recruitment Procedures

Following circulation of the prospectus, requests for information from potential schools will be received. Subsequent contacts with potential schools either by phone or at the school should be directed toward judging appropriate settings and appropriate partners.

Selective organizational change in schools has great promise for reducing delinquency, for alleviating other school-related troubles (including dropout), and for fostering positive benefits of enhanced learning and improved morale. Yet there is little well-documented history of practical applications of this approach. Although delinquency theory and limited experience can be used to suggest some modest changes, it is not at all clear how such changes are initiated and sustained. As a starting point, then, *favorable opportunities* must be located for testing these ideas, and *conditions and relationships* must be negotiated that will permit such a test.

Stimulating and managing selective organizational change will be difficult enough--ambiguous in its methods and uncertain in its outcomes--without adding unnecessarily stringent conditions for selection of schools. There are no mechanical and uniform procedures to apply to selecting schools, but there are some practical guidelines.

4.1.5.1 Take the Initiative to Seek and Recruit Promising Sites

Sponsors have a set of ideas of sufficient power to warrant practical application. Presumably some schools will be interested and ready to respond to invitations. Sponsors can use initial conversations with principals, superintendents, teachers, parents, and others to *discover* the questions most critical for each group, the reassurances most often sought by each group, the directions most favored by each group, and so forth. Without falling into the trap of telling each one what he or she wants to hear, sponsors can learn whatever aspects of the proposed effort moved each person or group to seek further information.

4.1.5.2 Seek Informed Agreements for Joint Work

The proposed work is important and promising; it is also likely to be unfamiliar, untried, difficult, complex, and demanding of persons' knowledge, skill, confidence, time, patience, and humor. The "invitational" procedure that is described here is intended to insure that work proceeds only on the basis of voluntary and informed agreement.

4.1.5.3 Develop a Checklist of Evidence for Distinguishing Favorable Sites

The central question here is, how can one judge a "favorable" site? Two considerations are at issue. The first is a judgment about the opportunity to demonstrate gain; selected sites should display some evidence of difficulties with disruptive behavior, dropout, absenteeism, and the like, to which the proposed changes can be addressed and in terms of which progress can be judged. Second is the issue of receptivity to change; selected sites should display some evidence that new ideas will be seriously addressed, new practices aggressively tried. Prospects must be judged both by local conditions and by the climate for a partnership approach.

As a first stage, then, potential sponsors or partners will need to take the time to consider both what is known about promising delinquency prevention ideas or approaches and what is likely to be encountered in the real world of school organization. Out of these considerations can come criteria for selection that recognize the variations and constraints of actual school life without compromising the central most promising ideas of delinquency prevention. The emerging criteria should be reflected both in an invitational prospectus (stating what work is intended and under what circumstances) and in negotiations with specific schools.

In any one school or community, the evidence is likely to be mixed; some circumstances will support a decision to proceed and other circumstances will raise serious doubt. At some point, sponsors must rely on personal judgment to make a decision. With increased experience, that judgment should get more reliable and the checklist of evidence will get longer, more precise, and more useful.

The following list offers suggestions on the type of information that is revealing and relevant as evidence about local circumstances and opportunities.

- Current Pressure for Change: Sponsors must distinguish those schools experiencing some pressure toward change from those schools that are satisfied with (and unlikely to change) present arrangements or those schools where crises are so severe that action is either paralyzed or precipitous. The most favorable site is one in which a certain moderate degree of dissatisfaction or stress prevails. Seek momentum but not previously established commitment to a specific "model" program.

- Fate of Past Change Efforts: A school's receptivity toward change or particular change strategies will be governed in part by history. What changes have been tried in the past five years and how have they fared? Ironically, a history of success can be as difficult to follow as a history of failure. Just as school personnel may be convinced, on the basis of history, that nothing will work, so they can be convinced that the record of a past principal (superintendent, teacher) can never be equaled. Look for evidence that people will tolerate or even welcome efforts that are relatively ambitious, somewhat ambiguous, but with substantial long-term benefits; look for evidence that school personnel will tolerate or insist upon a partnership arrangement and that outside sponsors are not walking into a role of scapegoat, hit man, or resident pollyanna.

- Perspective on Ideas and Approaches: Presumably, the criteria to be applied to negotiation with specific schools include judging perspectives on which partners might agree. If a principal wants to set up an in-school suspension program, is further negotiation wise? If a principal is intrigued by the approach but his relations with his own faculty are shaky, how can the prospects be judged? What kind of statements are made about promising solutions to current issues? What local perspectives are revealed by what is observed, heard, and read?

- An Ability to Commit Resources of Time, Personnel, and money.

- An Ability and Willingness to Generate Support from Others and to Seek Strategies for Accomodating Resistance: *Existing support* should be evident from a range of levels and sources, e.g., administrators, teachers in key departments, influential committee chairs, the central district.

- A Tolerance for Risk.

- An Interest in School Improvement Generally: A predisposition

to treat the school's programs, structures, and organizations as the focus of change, rather than focusing on the treatment of persons.

- A Willingness to Try Out New Ideas Without Outside Grant Support: That is, by trying something under ordinary conditions (which may include crowded classrooms, variations in staff quality and commitment, conflicting parent expectations, or community pressures).

No one person will have access to all sources of evidence. Evidence will *be of most worth if* it is collected close to the action, e.g., in conversations with school personnel; if it is gathered from more than one source (written records and conversations with people inside and outside the school at various levels), and if people do not think outsiders are there to evaluate. Evidence will be of least worth when it comes from distant or secondary sources (e.g., a rough impression of a school superintendent in another district), when it comes from only one source (e.g., a talk with only the principal of the potential site school) and thus reflects only one perspective and one arena of experience, and when people think money is attached to the answers they give to questions.

Where possible, arrange to observe schools in operation; spend at least a whole day observing classes, hallways, lunchroom, grounds. Pay attention to how students interact with each other, and with teachers and other adults (including outsiders). Note how teachers interact with members of the administration and with each other. Note what opportunities there are for teachers to interact, what topics are discussed and what activities occur in the teachers' lounge. Ask for invitations to formal meetings that reveal the interests, concerns, worries, curiosities, and excitement of school personnel. Seek informal opportunities for conversations with people who work in schools or who have frequent contact with schools. Look for people's perceptions of the "system." What tone is established by building principals? How much leeway is there for policy development by building principals? When obtaining evidence, spend time watching, reading, listening, and asking questions. Resist the temptation to offer solutions.

4.1.6 Negotiating Specific Agreements with Local Schools

The recruitment activities should produce a set of schools that remain interested in the proposed effort following preliminary phone conversations and that remain of interest to outside groups. The negotiation period offers more opportunities for both parties to declare interest or to back out early.

The negotiation period consists of several conversations with key people over a period of weeks. The temptation will be to take the first

statement of acceptance as the conclusion of negotiation and to proceed too fast in trying to put substantive ideas into practice. Despite reports of how hard it is to present ideas to the schools, getting a hearing for an idea in the schools, and even getting permission to engage in a project, has been deceptively easy. Disaster tends to set in after a project is underway--as implications become more clear, frustrations over new practices emerge, factions consolidate, and so forth. It will be easy to confuse initial enthusiasm with understanding and to let a statement of willingness stand in place of more careful examination of potential roles and relationships. In part, the willingness to let nominal or minimal permission substitute for more substantive conversations comes from an uncertainty about how to proceed further. A negotiation that takes place over several conversations insures that there is time for agreement to be based on a firm sense of local resources and constraints, problems, and strengths, and that there is time for ground rules of the partnership to be worked out.

4.1.6.1 Negotiation Should be Used to Establish General Agreement Among Principal Parties on the Basic Ideas and Direction

Agreement on basic ideas and direction means that the principal, other administrators, and some teachers agree that changes in practices and policies are likely to produce an effect on the behavior of students. That is, there must be an agreement that improvement will proceed from changes in school organization and practice. Second, agreement extends to anticipated possible changes in curriculum, placement practices, classroom instruction approaches, governance, and the like. That is, shared efforts to grapple with possible practical implications during negotiation offer a stronger basis on which to build than a more easily negotiated but less durable aim to "work together" toward school climate improvement. Such grappling over complex issues and difficult practical problems during the course of negotiation cannot be expected, at this stage, to produce commitments for specific program action, but it can demonstrate the nature of the working relationship and substantive focus required for subsequent steps.

4.1.6.2 The Negotiation Period Should be Used to Sort Out Roles and Relationships for the Early Stages of Work

The roles and relationships at issue here all bear on the design and conduct of *change*. By means of the partnership arrangement, a situation is constructed in which the "change agent" is in effect a *group* of persons who work together to propose, design, test, reflect on, and revise a set of altered practices in the schools they work.[1]

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[1]The usual image of a change agent is that of a person with a vision and with some prospects of influencing others to move toward that vision. The change agent (the changer) is frequently different from the bearer of

Members of the group bring to the enterprise a variety of resources for influencing change. At any point in a sequence of change, the group as a whole, or the various members of the group, may shift expectations for what roles are assumed, what contributions are made, what resources are marshalled and what relationships are pursued within the group and between the change-agent group and others inside or outside the school. In a fundamental sense, the relationships anticipated here are collegial and collaborative.

Generally, *insiders can be expected to assist change by:*

- Being familiar enough with the way things get done to design a sequence of practical steps
- Generating support from others inside the schools and from certain others outside the school
- Developing a repertoire of practical applications and providing the opportunity to try out an idea
- Offering feedback that suggests how ideas might be adapted to suit local circumstances
- Making systematic and focused observations about how particular ideas work in practice
- Providing continuity in practice over a long enough time to produce and gauge their effects

Generally, *outside partners may be expected to assist change by:*

- Offering ideas or observations that insiders will not permit from each other; e.g., playing the devil's advocate if principles are unnecessarily compromised in the interests of expedience
- Offering limited money, technical assistance, or other supplemental resources
- Having the time to review ideas and practices in other schools

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change (the changee), the person or group that is expected to do something different as a result of the change agent's efforts. In some cases, the identity of the change agent is mysterious; new ideas are introduced and somehow mysteriously left to be transformed into reality without much attention to how, or under what conditions, or with what help.

- Lending the credibility of state or federal interest
- Offering a forum for discussion of substantive issues

The extent to which each partner acts as an agent for change, then, is contingent upon the resources that the partners bring to the project (including resources of formal position and informal influence) and upon the demand for those resources at each stage of work.

The negotiation period should end with a written summary of where things stand. This statement should record the decision to proceed or not to proceed; the history of the recruitment and negotiation; the evidence on which negotiation was pursued (what made this appear to be a promising school?); the questions that were raised, the resolutions that were sought, and the outcome of negotiation: divergent perspectives on the local situation, on the prospects for the partnership, and on an appropriate direction for improvement; and agreements, if any, on next steps, including agreements about activities for the first stage of work and agreements about roles and relationships.

The statement should be prepared and reviewed collectively. It serves as an important record of the understanding of a situation at the point where a change-oriented partnership is initiated. It stands as the basis on which next steps are justified and a yardstick against which future progress can be judged.

4.1.7 Organizing Support

Generating support should not be considered an idle chore needed to get permission; rather, support strategies should flow from what accomplishments are sought at each stage, and should be designed with an eye toward identifying present and potential roles of persons, groups, and organizations.

The search for support will take on increasing clarity if it is guided by the following questions: Whose support is sought? For what specific purposes? In what form? Who can recruit or generate support?

As a starting point, when considering whose support is sought, take into account all those who can say no. However, this rule should be qualified in several ways.

Not everyone's support is needed. Which persons, groups, or organizations are strategically placed to be important and in what ways? The temptation is usually to generate a list of every influential person in a radius of ten miles and to mount a campaign to win general support. But the relevance of particular support depends at each stage on what outside groups want to accomplish and what subsequent moves are anticipated.

If the early stages of work call only for some outsiders to establish a working relationship with school personnel, then questions should be asked about how strangers enter schools. Whose support is required if the outsiders are to be viewed as legitimate temporary members of the school? Is the formal approval of the principal enough? (If outsiders have been asked by the principal to assist in formulating a principal's strategy for accomplishing change, then the answer may be yes; if outsiders expect to talk freely with teachers, observe classrooms, engage teachers as partners in the design of change, then the principal's hearty welcome may not be enough.)

Distinguish between formal position and informal influence. Some people or groups have both; some have one without the other; and some have enthusiasm without either formal authority or informal influence. Every school has an informal structure and informal rules for what can and cannot be said and done. Unless outside groups become very familiar with a particular school, its informal arrangements will not be distinguishable.

In planning a campaign for generating support, take into account all opportunities that persons have to say yes or no. Superintendents or school boards may create an atmosphere of support for an effort by publicly endorsing it, and may offer more tangible contributions in the shape of materials, release time, staff development, consultation and good publicity. Similarly, superintendents or school boards may be able to stop an effort before it starts or shut it down later by refusing permission for certain activities, restricting the budget, initiating or enforcing policies that proscribe the intended activities; and spreading bad news to school personnel, parents, the press, and others. People in nominal authority, then, can use the resources of that authority to help or to hinder a project. People without nominal authority, e.g., teachers, students, and parents exercise power in other ways. They lend support by carving out time from busy schedules for joint work, and by spreading good news among colleagues. They may undermine a project by simply giving lip service to an innovation while continuing with old practices, by voicing doubts and complaints, and by invoking the authority of other organizations (the union, citizen advisory groups, etc.). People without nominal authority are not without power and influence in determining what new ideas or practices succeed or fail in a school.

4.1.7.1 Who Can Recruit or Generate Support?

Apart from the issue of good ideas and bad ones, there is the question of who listens to whom. Whose views are credited or discredited? The answer to this question cannot be known in advance; it will have to be discovered in each school. In presenting a case for changing mainstream policies and practices in schools or in making a case for a partnership between schools and others, outside groups will *always* be conveying more

than just information. First, expectations for interaction will be explicitly or implicitly conveyed. The teacher who goes to a staff development conference and returns to make a presentation to a faculty committee is acting the part of the knowledgeable colleague, a role that may or may not be highly approved by others in the room. Whether to introduce an idea through casual conversation over a beer, in a casual conversation in a hallway, in a faculty committee meeting, before an entire faculty meeting, in the middle of a routine in-service seminar, as a written bulletin circulated from the central office, or in a prospectus presented formally to the principal, adminstrative staff, and teachers is not an inconsequential decision.

Selecting an occasion for introducing ideas will depend on *who can talk to whom about what, under what circumstances, and for what apparent purposes.* In some schools, teachers who view the principal as the appropriate source of news about administrative policy do not trust that same principal's assessment of parents' interests or the worth of a new set of materials. On the latter issues, teachers may be more attentive to each other's judgments. Schools vary in the nature and extent of ideas sought from outside sources, or in the degree of their receptivity to outsiders' proposals.

In some schools, teachers can present new ideas or practices to one another with some prospects of favorable response; in other schools, such suggestions are viewed as interference. In the latter instances, trying to build support by praising the innovative practices of one teacher is likely to backfire. In some schools, ideas can be introduced in a faculty meeting or in committee meetings; in other schools, discussion on a public occasion is best preceded by more informal one-to-one conversations. In some schools, outsiders have been successful in gaining commitments from principal or teachers to try something new; in other schools, administrators and/or faculty will listen only to their peers. What form of support is being sought? Support may range from persmission, to endorsement, to participation, or to only interested bystanding.

Permission is an acceptance of particular kinds of activities. To work in a local school, written permission may be needed from the district administration. This permission is explicit and formal, but the weight it carries at the building level may be overestimated. Written permission does not imply that the writer will in fact speak favorably of the effort, will recruit support, or will ensure that others' decisions (e.g., budget allocations) conform with the needs of the project. Permission is generally sought from those more senior in the hierarchy; the equivalent in the lower ranks of the structure is tolerance. The limits of permission and tolerance (and the circumstances under which they can be converted to active support or active resistance) will be discovered as the local school project unfolds.

Endorsements, or statements of support. Can be sought from those in a position to create breathing space for the effort by persuading others that it is a good thing to try. Endorsers may also support a new project by acting as a buffer for the school board, the central administration, and the media.

Interested bystander support is of the "I don't want to try it but I'm interested in what happens when you do" variety. It amounts to leaving people a graceful way out and it may be the most critical form of support to generate from nonparticipating members of a school (teachers, parents, students, administrators not more actively involved). From interested bystanders one might ask only that they give the effort sufficient time to get off the ground, that they permit themselves to be treated as allies (from whom observations are sought periodically), and that they refrain from premature complaints or negative judgments. This form of support is difficult to generate and sustain and the one least attended to in practice. The frequency with which faculties polarize around support of or opposition to innovative programs may be a mark of schools' failure to generate this type of bystander support.

Participation can take any one of the following forms:

- Joining advisory groups, task forces, planning groups[1]
- Developing materials
- Working jointly with outside partners to document the course of the project
- Participating in an assessment phase (talking to others, administering survey instruments, working with others to study school climate)
- Reviewing proposed changes, new programs, or materials
- Trying out new practices or materials in classrooms; trying out new joint efforts with colleagues
- Designing evaluation criteria and helping to judge progress
- Participating in seminars to review the premises, tactics, and progress of the work
- Adding time and work commitments relating to the project or displacing other commitments in favor of ones required for this work

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[1]This does not imply that membership in these groups is made up entirely of people who support the effort; people opposed to the effort, or skeptical of it, may want to participate to serve a watchdog function. Although this development will produce some discomfort and may mean that some stages take longer than anticipated, it may also result in proposals that are more realistic and have prospects for broader support in the long run.

4.1.8 Accommodating Resistance

The other side of support is typically seen as resistance. Yet often, resistance is not so much an active campaign of opposition as it is massive disinterest. In attempting organizational change, i.e., change in some of the basic school routines that affect large numbers of people directly, the risk of more active resistance is increased. An organizational perspective helps in planning tactics for support; similarly, an organizational perspective will offer the greatest help in responding to resistance. Organizing questions can be used to sort out the kinds of resistance that are likely to arise and to plan strategies for dealing with them: Whose resistance can be anticipated? Under what conditions will resistance emerge? And what forms will resistance take?

4.1.8.1 Whose Resistance Can be Anticipated?

In proposing selective organizational change outside groups are proposing to have an effect, direct or indirect, on the way people get through the school day. The approach will have effects that at the outset will be ambiguous, uncertain, and diffuse. If the changes are to count, if they are substantial enough and important enough to make a difference in how people act, then those changes must necessarily touch all the principal groups: Teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

Further, changes will have different significance for different groups. Take two examples:

Teachers typically have little say in school policy decisions, yet are expected to accomplish something akin to miracles in the classroom. Even when proposed changes are designed to help teachers' recurring problems, they may have the effect of increasing their burden and vulnerability without appreciably enhancing their influence or effectiveness. In a study of change projects conducted by the Rand Corporation (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978) it was found that changes were more likely to take hold where teachers had a sense of effectiveness, a sense of being able to influence how students learn and behave. To accommodate teacher resistance and to increase the sense of effectiveness, teachers should be offered support as they try out something new. Regular in-service support should concentrate on emerging practical problems and decision making (budget, record keeping and reporting, curriculum-materials replacement) that is consistent with the demands of the new practices.[1]

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[1]These and related issues are addressed in "School Success and Staff Development: A Summary of Recently Completed Research" (Little, 1981).

Administrators routinely take into account the demands, expectations, and interests, often conflicting, of higher administrators, school boards, parents, teachers, specialists, students, custodial, and secretarial staff, the mayor and city council, state and federal officials and universities. The relative weight given to each may vary from school to school and from time to time within the same school. The way the principal views these demands and interests will affect the nature and extent of support or resistance at particular stages of work. Resistance may be a response to perceived intolerance from the system, a fear of generating more work, ambivalence about potentially changed relations with faculty, uncertainty about the possible demands for leadership, and so forth. The more complex the role played by a principal, the more varied and complex are the potential sources of resistance and the more critical it will be to develop with the principal useful and relevant tactics.

Although organizational requirements and organizational self-interest may not be the only grounds for resistance, they are powerful grounds and appear to be the most frequently overlooked. When whole groups or particular members of groups resist new ideas, practices, and policies, it may be because they perceive conflicts with present obligations, rights, and responsibilities (including those that affect their paycheck and social standing). Some complaints or criticisms, offered privately and publicly, are that they have no idea how to go about attempting the changes: the ideas are not clear; the translation from idea to practice is not clear; the translation calls for capabilities they think they lack and see no way to get. Under these circumstances, initial enthusiasm or disinterest may turn into resistance as staff see themselves placed more and more in jeopardy (i.e., fearing the appearance of incompetence).

4.1.8.2 Under What Conditions Will Resistance Emerge?

Much advice has been offered on how to overcome initial resistance to a new idea. Usually, any idea that is even remotely promising and that is demonstrably related to practical issues facing the schools can gain an initial hearing relatively easily. Getting initial support to try something, and overcoming resistance, may be largely a matter of leaving nonparticipants a graceful way out. Overcoming initial and subsequent resistance calls for approaches of the following sort:

- Establishing some base of support for or interest in the idea *before* it is raised in a public forum. For example, seek individual or small group conversations as a way of stimulating interest and gauging support before making a presentation to a full faculty meeting.

- Being straightforward about the strengths of the approach, about the known weaknesses or uncertainties, and about any anticipated problems in implementation. Stress *description* that is clear and specific, but avoid sounding apologetic about the probable scale and complexity.

- Being careful of the language used in naming and describing the effort. In this document, emphasis is on delinquency prevention. Without compromising the intended outcomes, sponsors can employ a language in schools that evokes more positive imagery and that is more immediately responsive to teachers' and administrators' central obligations. (Experience indicates that people do not hear the whole phrase "delinquency prevention" but only the word "delinquency," and, even where careful groundwork has been laid, proceed to describe the possible changes as small programs for delinquent kids. This has happened even in an audience of school principals committed to the idea of changing school environments.) Inappropriate vocabulary traps are likely to be common during change efforts--the word "delinquency" is one word. Others will be specific to schools and are yet to be discovered. In some schools, anything called "human relations training" is taboo, regardless of its intent and content. Elsewhere, efforts can be called anything but "an experiment." Negotiations and collaborative work in schools will uncover those terms that are traps (and that tend to inhibit or distract more useful discussion), and will reveal or build a shared language that is more fruitful. In first stages of negotiation, sponsors must be prepared to describe the guiding ideas or intended applications in several different ways, using a range of vocabulary and imagery.

Resistance may be imagined where there is none: Delays and difficulties during the implementation stage may give rise to explanations of things gone wrong that imply blame. On these occasions, it is easy to abandon the organizational perspective and attribute the problems to lack of trust, bad faith, cold feet, incompetence, insincerity, lust for power, lack of commitment, and other signs of personal unworthiness. These interpretations are not useful. Permitting the assignment of personal blame is both unfair and a lost opportunity. When delays occur and practical difficulties arise, collective assessment and problem solving should be used, thereby strengthening the capacity of the school-based team to stimulate and manage change.

The unbridled enthusiasm of converts to a new way of doing things will tend to back the nonparticipants into a corner. Once there, the nonparticipants may reasonably be expected to band together to command the virtues of the good old days and to lambast the evils of interference. Nonparticipants may have many reasonable and defensible grounds for not participating; to force them into a resistant group will tie up the time and energy of the participants in needless but endless and draining disputes.

A fundamental principle of this approach is that it is voluntary.

The agreement to proceed in a school is grounded on the shared perception of the principal and at least some teachers that the attempt is worthwhile. It is also grounded on the expectation that those who do not participate will not be coerced directly or subtly. (It will not help to pay teachers to participate if they do not want to participate in the first place.) Where teachers feel that they have been drafted for some pet program of the principal's or where principals only feel that they are complying with interests of the superintendent, resistance is likely to be widespread and covert (e.g., lip service).

Practices and relationships in any organization are interwoven in ways that are not apparent until attempts are made to change one of them. Changes are likely to have unanticipated effects that influence the support or resistance of various groups. In one example, decentralization of decision making from the superintendent level to the building level went smoothly for two years until the accumulated affects of more limited roles began to produce a countermovement by the assistant superintendents. In another, initial passivity of teachers not participating in the Hooked On Books experiment at the Washington, D.C. Garnet-Patterson school shifted to active opposition in a matter of weeks as it becamse clear that student enthusiasm for the new approach would make it difficult for uninterested teachers to maintain their traditional approach (Fader, 1971). In efforts initiated in a partnership between UCLA, the Institute for Development of Educational Activities or I/D/E/A, and eighteen local schools in southern California, resistance emerged as principals began to experience increased demands for leadership for which they were trained (Goodlad, 1975).

Trying anything new creates risks that persons will fail and be labeled incompetent or naive. Where the course of change is not very predictable, as is often the case, school personnel may fear loss of status among their peers or superiors, erosion of influence, and loss of money or even job. Anticipated *outside* pressures are also relevant here (letters to the editor, parent complaints, school board priorities).

Some groups may feel that others' benefit will be their loss. For example, to increase opportunities for a broader range of students may lead teachers to fear having larger classes, teaching subjects they are not prepared for, using teaching strategies they do not feel temperamentally suited for, and spending weekends in sensitivity training sessions.

4.1.8.3 What Forms Will Resistance Take?

In any one person's mind, the word "resistance" may conjure up images of a stone wall, a curt memo from the top, a fight in a faculty meeting, or Mrs. Jones who never likes anything; but in practice the manifestations of resistance will be varied and not always obvious or recognizable until a crisis is in the offing.

Some of the more common possibilities are public complaints; creating only the appearance without the substance of change; minimal and selective incorporation of the new approach; and renaming of old activities to appear new.

In public presentations or in personal conversations, *complaints often take the form of questions that reveal sources of resistance.* In public meetings, they may also be a tactic for discrediting the proponents, serving as a socially acceptable way of declaring disinterest. In response to any one complaint, it is best to be straightforward, remembering that the sources of resistance are often legitimate and are tied to organizational circumstances and consequences that may not be understood in any great detail. Sometimes answers will erode resistance and create interest. Other times, answers to one question will simply produce more questions. If several rounds of questions produce only more questions and no sign of emerging areas of agreement, the prospects for fruitful partnership are slim. The following paragraphs describe some of the varied forms complaints may take.

- "It's too Difficult:" First, proponents should try to discover where the anticipated sources of difficulty lie. Is the technology (e.g., approaches to cooperative learning) unfamiliar and presumed difficult? Are colleagues typically unsympathetic to innovation, and thus likely to exert pressure against the effort? There are several realistic sources of difficulty; each can be the subject of an argument that relies on clear, specific statements of possible approaches to illustrate that sponsors recognize the likely difficulties and have given thoughtful attention to resolving them. Overall, the aim is to gain agreement that the proposed venture is probably no more difficult than other chores attempted routinely by teachers (e.g., teaching people to read) and no less important.

- "It Will Take Too Long; We Need Help Now:" To answer this, sponsors must explore (on the basis of past research and practical application) what benefits might realistically be anticipated in a week, a month, a year or more. It could conceivably take three to five years to achieve a dramatic reduction in the dropout rate, while other effects might be achieved more quickly. There is some evidence that improvements in classroom life (attentiveness, participation, and the like) might be accomplished in two to six months. If teachers and administrators will agree to give serious trial to promising school and classroom practices, it appears that there may be sufficient gain in six months to encourage teachers to continue.[1]

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[1] In one school in Vermont, teachers practicing the "LEAST" approach

- "It Will Cost Too Much:" There may be costs that some school personnel are anticipating that have not occurred to other partners. If someone asks this question, it is a good idea to ask what costs they foresee. The costs of the organizational approach fall more in the area of intent and persistence than in money. It is unlikely that schools would end up pursuing a strategy that required more staff or more space. New materials might be called for but they could be locally designed and prepared. In some cases it may be possible to report that money has been allocated by some organization to support the costs of first stages of change costs, time and mileage for outside partners, materials, funds to support substitute teachers during in-service sessions, and so forth. In contrast to add-on programs, which have a history of leaving basic problems untouched, the organizational approach can only be seen as low cost.

- "It's Too Vague:" This complaint may mean that in the discussion of the proposed effort sponsors have not employed vocabulary that is recognizable to the school personnel participating in early discussions; i.e., this proposal is not seen as having any bearing on the recurrent practical issues of going to or working in school. To make the venture seem practicable and desirable, potential partners will need to work out examples and descriptions that are related to actual experience and that permit each other to discover whether or not they in fact agree on the approach and the principles guiding it. If outside partners are unfamiliar with schools, they can seek the help of experienced school people in preparing descriptions or conducting negotiations with local schools. It does not seem unreasonable that

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to classroom management and school discipline reported that discipline problems were fewer and that they were more confident of their ability to manage classes; students in the same school reported after four months that they liked going to classes more than they had the year before, and that their teachers were making an effort to be fair and consistent. Teachers in another school, applying Glasser's (1969) "reality therapy," reported improved relations with students and increased confidence in their collective ability to tackle even tough and persistent school problems (e.g., a chaotic and chronically disruptive lunchroom). Teachers in inner city elementary and secondary schools attempting to introduce "mastery learning" approaches to classroom instruction found that within six months they had gained skill and confidence in the approach and that an unanticipated benefit was the reduction of classroom discipline problems.

that local schools would expect outside partners to have some definitive view of next steps, however limited. But there is a fine line to walk between being too definitive and polished and being too loose. In any negotiations, it takes some time and practice to make the partners' roles symmetrical. Early on, the question will probably be asked, "If we agree, what would you want (me, us) to do?

- "It Couldn't Be Done Here:" The first response to this complaint is: Why do you think so? Aspects of any school (size, crowdedness) can be treated as potential difficulties, things to take into account, or excuses not to try anything new. The claim here is that the intended improvements can be achieved under the most ordinary circumstances, given a reasonable amount of energy, thought and persistence; the effects that are sought do not depend on more money, smaller classes, more charismatic teachers, or the unqualified admiration of the surrounding community. Some ordinary circumstances are more difficult than others, but to say they control the possibilities for change is to make the place of ideas and initiative trivial and inconsequential.

As negotiations continue with local schools, the inventory of typical complaints will proliferate ("too big," "too manipulative," "they won't approve") and so will the repertoire of responses. Some complaints will not have an answer (e.g., "we tried something like that two years ago and it was a disaster.") and it is best to say so. Use the occasion for learning more about the site.

Another form of resistance occurs when schools may wish to mount an initiative with the *appearance, but not the substance, of change.* This will be particularly true where there is outside pressure for improvement not matched by interest inside the school. A rigorous negotiation phase should weed out those schools where efforts are likely to have only symbolic import. With more time people can notice whether there is support for organizational improvement or whether routine school decisions help or hinder the effort.

Finally, resistance may take the form of *selective incorporation* of those aspects of the proposal that require the least departure from their established routines, a process of trivial adjustments. *Old activities may be renamed* to fit new descriptions: in-school suspension programs are described as "educational alternatives:" "ability grouping" turns overnight into "individualizing."

The description of Stage One of the implementation sequence introduced the steps to forming workable partnerships with schools. Stage Two describes how selected problems of school life might be assessed and adjustments proposed.

4.2 Stage Two of the Implementation Sequence: Assessing the School Situation

4.2.1 Summary

Stage Two, Assessing the School Situation, calls for a clear enough understanding of a specific school situation to propose changes or improvements that are both consistent with the program principles and possible in a particular school. This stage calls for first making a careful assessment of the setting: studying those features of school organization that may influence the degree to which students have a stake in school, have access to opportunities to prove competence and worth, are positively or negatively viewed by teachers and peers, and enjoy promising prospects for future educational or work success.

Selective organizational change requires that partners have a clear enough understanding of the workings of a particular school to propose those improvements that are both *desirable* (consistent with the intended theoretical direction) and *feasible* (consistent with the limits and possibilities in this school). Agreements should be sought that encourage people to refrain from offering suggestions, recommendations, or proposals for some specified period of time (e.g., ten weeks). The first task is to get a clear sense of how things work, *not* to make judgments about whether particular arrangements are helpful or harmful, appropriate, or problematical.

4.2.2 Purposes of Assessing

Assessments of the local school situation are the first occasions for school personnel and outside partners to work jointly; thus, the assessment activities serve a variety of purposes:

- They give strangers sufficient acquaintance with the workings of the school to avoid grossly implausible or inappropriate suggestions; they offer insiders a fresh look.
- They create the occasion for lending scrutiny to the routine policies and practices that would ordinarily be left untouched (even if not always approved or admired).
- They create the opportunity for joint work during which the partners can come to view each other as colleagues.

4.2.3 What should be Noticed about the School Setting?

It will not be possible or necessary to do a thorough, systematic assessment of all aspects of school life. In assessing each school, team members will be looking for the ways that *potentially* powerful or problematic arrangements (e.g., curriculum, governance) are *actually*

expressed in the school, and how the nature of the school as a *workplace* supports or inhibits teachers' or administrators' efforts to introduce change.

Observe what arrangements offer opportunities for students to gain and demonstrate competence, to belong, and to be seen in a positive light. Some aspects of school life, if changed or strengthened, could help prevent delinquency and other forms of troublesome behavior. For example:

- The nature and range of values reflected in the *curriculum* will be more important than the sheer number of course offerings. How many kinds of opportunities do students have to demonstrate their worth and competence? How are those opportunities viewed by students and teachers? What are the course placement or selection arrangements?

- What are the *school rules* and arrangements for *governance?* What opportunities do they offer for people to teach and learn responsible behavior? What opportunities do teachers, students, and parents have to influence school policy and practice? to participate together in the work of the school, from teaching to maintenance?

- What is the nature of typical classroom interaction between teachers and students or among students? What is the relative emphasis on cooperation or competition? What are the usual approaches to instruction? to evaluating students' work and offering feedback on progress?

- What is the nature of student peer interaction? Are there "in-groups" and "out-groups" and who are they? Do students form friendships across racial, ethnic, or other group lines?

Observe the limits on and possibilities for change created by (1) established habits of collegiality and experimentation among the staff; (2) existing bureaucratic arrangements and requirements; and (3) externalities, including community or district interests and priorities.

First, schools are organizations and the activities that go on in them are in powerful respects "normative." Some activities are required, others are forbidden and still others are selectively encouraged or discouraged or ignored. There is some evidence (Little, 1981) that changes of the sort anticipated here are most likely to take hold where teachers routinely work together as colleagues on improving the practice of teaching, i.e., they have the perspectives and work habits of colleagues. Further, change is most supported in schools where teachers view their practices as the professional tools of their work, subject to

continuous scrutiny, discussion, and refinement; these are perspectives and habits of experimentation.

Changes are most likely to bring the anticipated effects where they are attempted on a large enough scale, by a large enough group of persons, over a long enough period of time to exert an influence that could properly be called organizational. Even assuming that individual teachers might have the interest, skill, knowledge, and organizational "permission" to pursue some of the promising approaches in isolation from their peers, it is unlikely that such small-scale and sporadic efforts would exert the kind of influence on schoolwide success or failure, order or disruption that could be achieved with more widespread effort.

For these reasons, habits or "norms" of collegiality and experimentation should be a focus of the initial assessment; strengthening those norms should similarly be an aim of practical initiatives undertaken later. On what occasions do teachers act together, as colleagues? What happens in faculty meetings? What instructional projects do teachers design and conduct together? Are there any task forces or committees operating on matters of curriculum instruction or governance? Do teachers design and conduct their own in-service days? What are the expectations among the teachers for trying something new? For telling others about it?

Second, school organizations are bureaucratic, and some particular bureaucratic arrangements may affect what changes are possible and by what means. What are the channels through which decisions are made or new ideas introduced and considered? Do all decisions of consequence come from the principal? The principal plus administrative staff? Are teachers organized along departmental lines? Interdisciplinary teams? Do they have decision making authority, and in what areas? Who has control over the budget? Is there any structure through which parents have influence? Students? What is the role of the superintendent and school board? What are the relevant provisions in the teachers' contract agreement?

And third, what external influences must schools take into account in launching an effort at school improvement? What are the current issues in the district or community at large that might affect a school's ability to commit time and thought to the sort of effort proposed here? What provisions of state law or district policy might affect the nature of proposed changes?

4.2.4 How should Information be Gathered about the School Setting?

The first aim is to understand and describe the present situation. For these purposes, outside partners can contribute fresh insight by adopting the stance of a "learner," asking questions and generally doing more listening than talking.

Do not underestimate the obvious. Start with very basic questions and broad observations. For all of their remarkable similarities, schools are not all alike. The outsider may ask "naive" questions to good advantage; students and staff will recognize that wide experience in schools is not enough to understand exactly what *this* school is like.

Focus on questions about how things are done. Make it clear that you are trying to get the best understanding you can of the local circumstances.

Employ a range of methods in assessing the school situation to best capture diverse views and competing perspectives and to obtain a balanced picture of strengths and weaknesses. The choice of methods will be based as much on organizational and political considerations as on the technical merits of the methods. Some methods to use are:

- Eyes and Ears: Watch the operations of the school in classrooms, front offices, hallways, and school grounds. Listen to talk among students, among adults, between students and adults. Ask questions of everybody. Look for opportunities for informal conversation.

- Written Documents and Records: Draw a summary picture of the school by reading its formal records and reports, including reports of achievement levels, written policies, descriptions of curriculum offerings and sequences, minutes of faculty or school board meetings, summary rates of truancy or dropout, and local media coverage (including the student newspaper).

- Interviews and Group Meetings: When preliminary observations begin to form, meet with individuals or groups to discuss observations, confirm or qualify insights, and organize the next steps in an assessment.

- Instrumentation: Design questionnaires, checklists, and other more structured assessment tools to make scrutiny of the local setting more systematic. The decision to use instrumentation is not guided by firm assessment rules but by expectations of school personnel for what constitutes appropriate evidence as a basis for action. What sort of information must be sought, by what method, for school personnel to take the assessment seriously and to consider doing anything different? In some schools, informal observations and task force discussions will be enough to stimulate action. In other schools, an assessment will be discredited unless it is based on hard evidence.

Work in teams composed of school insiders and outside partners for

this and all other stages of work. Arrange for teams that represent diverse perspectives and affiliations among faculty and students. A central purpose of the partnership is to encourage the application of an *organizational perspective* in designing improvements in school and specifically in mounting delinquency prevention initiatives. The assessment stage is the first critical opportunity for practicing that perspective and for formulating a view of the situation that leads toward organizational change.

4.3 Stage Three of the Implementation Sequence: Selecting a Target for Change

The assessment phase establishes a picture of local conditions, highlighting both strengths and problems. Presumably, it provides the grounds on which next steps are chosen. But the answer to the question "Where do we start?" is not always clear even then. Just as no mechanical procedures were used for selecting schools in the first place, no mechanical procedures will be used for getting from the assessment of the setting to a decision about proposed changes. Some practical guidelines are: examine team roles continuously, shift from description to judgment, and focus on the strengths of and possible improvements to the school.

4.3.1 Examine Team Roles

During the assessment stage, outside partners maintain the stance of "learners," relying on school personnel to inform them about the day-to-day workings of the school and stressing the practice of description. To move toward action requires that descriptions be made the subject of selective judgments: what aspects of the present school situation most calls for improvement, and by what specific contributions of the various partners? In this stage, outside partners may have a broader repertoire of change tactics and more license to be "imaginative"; insiders have more intimate knowledge of prevailing practice and more license to negotiate actual implementation tactics.

4.3.2 Shift from Description to Judgment

The assessment stage was organized to gain as clear an understanding as possible of the present local circumstances in a short period of time. That is, in assessing the situation, team members first describe those school organizational features that appear to have some bearing on access to opportunities and those that are likely to affect the prospects for and sequence of change. To select a target for change, team members must narrow the description further; judgments must be offered about which aspects of the school (1) could have the greatest benefit in reducing delinquency, dropout, and the rest; and (2) could be changed.

In a series of working sessions, almost seminars, team members can

work on the descriptions obtained during the assessment. A first task is to achieve agreement on what makes up a fair description. Sometimes a fair description must include a presentation of markedly different views of the same set of practices.

A second task will be to take on, one by one, the aspects of school organization as they have been described (e.g., curriculum, governance, classroom practice) and to discuss the theoretical implications of present practice. Some features of school organization may be organized to promote access and success for all students; other policies and practices may be strong in promoting access for some students but work to exclude others; and some practices may serve clear organizational purposes (e.g., obligations to the school board) but have little demonstrable benefit for students.

These should be *decision-free discussions*, during which the team (or separate task forces) acts to narrow and refine the initial description by making explicit the connections with notions of bonding and opportunity.

The starting point for discussion could be a summary of descriptive observations. The connections between policy and practice and the relevance of views held by teachers, students, and others can be hashed over in the work session, and the session can be used to elaborate the connections between the practice (intended and actual) and considerations of bonding, opportunity, and strain.

At the end of each work session, answers to the following questions permit a rough appraisal of prospects:

- If this practice were changed, could a decrease in troublesome behavior and an increase in satisfaction and learning be foreseen?
- How would change proceed in this school?

These questions can be answered without commitment to a course of action and without establishing priorities.

At the end of a series of work sessions, the team will have written summary descriptions of policy, practice, and diverse views in a number of key areas (curriculum, governance, evaluation), and assessments of the worth and practicability of change in each area.

4.3.3 Focus on Strengths of and Possible Improvements to the School

Existing organizational arrangements should be viewed with an eye toward how they could be modified, expanded, restricted, or otherwise

changed to improve access for all students, to improve the prospects for positive labeling, to improve opportunities to belong, and to improve interactions among students and between students and adults. Focusing on strengths and on strategies for improvement does not in any way compromise the theoretical position, the tie to variables that are critical to delinquency prevention, but enhances the likelihood that proposed changes will receive support in the school.

4.3.4 Criteria to Apply to Nominated Changes

The day of reckoning will come. The work of the team selecting a target must be time-limited; three to six months does not seem unreasonable. During that period some priorities will be identified and changes proposed. If the major observations of the assessment phase have been refined through working sessions, the ground will have been prepared for making decisions about if, where, and how to proceed. Two criteria apply to nominated changes:

- First, is it a worthy idea? Is it consistent with what is known about how organizations contribute to success or to trouble? Is it theoretically or conceptually an appropriate thing to try?

- Second, can it be tried here? What would it take in the way of staff capabilities, time, bureaucratic arrangements, materials, approvals, clearances, and so forth to turn the idea into practice?

Applying the criteria will take some practice and more than cursory agreement on a project to undertake. In judging worthiness, it will not be clear what the range of effects will be. Some unanticipated and unintended effects of a change could undermine or even destroy intended benefits. In judging feasibility, school personnel must foresee how other practices and policies will affect and will be affected by the proposed change. In one school, an admittedly flawed system of rules and enforcement policies was being maintained for a second year because it had already been changed each year for four years. The benefits of stability and predictability were thought to outweigh the possible benefits of another year's tinkering.

The first three stages of work may easily take a year or more. By that time, school personnel may begin to view the school (and their own ability to organize it) in a different light. State-level groups or other outside partners will have become far more familiar with the inner workings of the school and will have developed a set of working relationships that should lead toward change.

4.4 Stage Four of the Implementation Sequence: Making the Change

This chapter addresses the work of actual implementation: trying

out an idea in practice, working out the difficulties, discovering where the idea or its practice is unclear, tracing developments along expected and surprising lines. No finely scaled road map exists to guide a team through this stage, but some rough landmarks exist.

4.4.1 Examine Team Roles

The proposed change can be practiced only in the school itself in the daily course of school life. Beginning the change, then, places a heavy responsibility on school personnel to perform well and a heavy responsibility on the outside partners to have the answers when the going gets rough. If these responsibilities are too heavy and therefore unfulfilled, the partnership may fail. As the work shifts from deciding on a change to realizing the change, partners can ease some of the rough edges and improve the chances of continued teamwork by renegotiating expectations for team roles. *Reasonable expectations for inside partners* include:

- Directing the sequence of change
- Managing relations with the central administration, school board, or parents
- Actively participating or benignly observing once the decision is made to try something out
- Taking the lead role in designing a sequence of steps for realizing the change, in identifying next steps, and in establishing the place of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and others in getting things started
- Participating with outside partners in documenting the change and posing salient questions for evaluating effects
- Committing the time to meet as a group to review where things stand; regularly scheduled seminars can be used to establish the habit of scrutiny and reflection and to reduce the expectation that people will be blamed for floundering

Reasonable expectations for outside partners might include:

- Acting as documentors, remaining close enough to observe emerging effects and emerging problems but not directly participating in making the change happen
- Acting as the touchstone or even critic in matters of ideas thus keeping an eye on slippage between intent and practice
- Participating in periodic review sessions where practical solutions are shared and practical difficulties aired. Such

sessions can contribute to building a core reference group of supporters in the school, can consolidate team relations during the implementation stage, and can produce the agenda for in-service training designed to deal with recurring practical difficulties.

- Offering illustrations from past experience. State-level outside groups and other outside members of the team are not likely to have had extensive direct experience in managing change in schools. However, this is a stage in which principals, counselors, and teachers experienced with change efforts in other schools can make the strongest contribution, a contribution that will be most effective if they have been team members from the beginning.

- Helping to arrange for outside help: Materials, training, or technical assistance requested by school personnel, checking out others' responses to particular developments.

- *Not* having all the answers or not directing the sequence of change.

In sum, the shift in roles and expectations should permit outsiders to remain partners even though they do not have all the answers, and should permit school personnel to remain partners even though the move to practice may not go smoothly.

4.4.2 Staging the Work

An agreement to act has presumably been reached: something about the school will be scrutinized more closely and ultimately changed. Getting under way will now require a set of agreements about *how* the work will proceed; in what stages, when, with what resources, and under whose direction.

For all the rhetoric of "planning" and "objectives" that often accompanies decisions for change, a rather common assumption is that any creative person should know what to do next. The take-it-and-run-with-it approach may be flattering at the outset but it has a history of contributing to disillusionment, to the assignment of blame to individuals for failing, and to the quick abandonment of new practice.

Whatever persons' creativity, skill, and good intentions, changing the routine habits and expectations of an organization cannot be managed simply by turning people loose with a good idea. Change in the *organizational* features of the school by isolated, individual, and sporadic attempts at new practice will not be sufficient. Such changes require collective, collegial efforts--and a plan for getting things

done. Isolated individual attempts cannot contribute to the clarity or build the capabilities required for translation of these ideas into practice. The take-it-and-run approach does not offer enough support to people who are trying something new. Nor does it offer the opportunity for building a shared organizational perspective by concerted attention to existing conditions and emerging effects. Staging the work requires:

- A *strategy* that takes into account (1) the way the proposed target change is connected to or embedded in other practices, policies, or arrangements; (2) present commitments or expectations that create either limitations or possibilities for school personnel; and (3) a description of rough stages of change that should be observable over time (*what* will be done, *when*, by *whom*).

- A written *plan* that organizes the stages of work and offers at least a set of specific intents and steps from which the team may later deviate.

- Design and conduct of *staff training*.

- Scheduled *review sessions* and other provisions for documentation and evaluation.[1]

- An agreement to offer *sufficient time* for practice to settle and effects to emerge.

4.4.3 Providing In-Service Training and Other Forms of Help

Regardless of the careful preparations made on paper, all the practical problems of implementation that will emerge cannot be anticipated. And even if most of them could be anticipated, trying to solve them in advance by preimplementation training would be something like trying to test drive a car while it is still on the assembly line. Implementation is not an event, planned one week and fully in place the next. The way that implementation proceeds in any one school will guide the type and extent of support that is sought.

It is not always clear what actions are consistent with the good idea that has been endorsed. Implementors start off with some idea of

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[1]These review sessions are intended to be collaborative, involving outside partners as well as the core group of participating school practitioners. In addition, outside partners may find it useful to seek discussion with and assistance from others who have attempted a collaborative venture with local schools.

how to translate an idea into practice, only to discover three weeks later that their notions of new practice are not firm enough to help them displace old habits. A good idea on paper for example, might be to "increase the occasions on which students are rewarded for work accomplished." What does that mean in practice? Eliminating Fs? Changing standards for good work? Using more frequent verbal interactions with students as occasions for praising accomplishments? Dividing the work into smaller chunks so that students have more chances to earn credit? Designing remedial classes? What practices *fit* with the intent?

Even when people have a clear idea of what practices are relevant and appropriate, they may not feel capable of employing them. Teachers may believe that in theory a mastery learning approach will offer more students a chance to learn and to belong, but may not have any idea how to go about organizing the curriculum for its implementation. Advice to "Just try it--you'll figure something out" will not be very helpful.

And finally, the way that practices or policies are interconnected will not always be apparent when change is initiated. As the change proceeds, efforts may become snagged on previously unnoticed organizational requirements, everything from union demands to budget procedures to state rules and regulations. Help in solving the unanticipated problems of implementation can take the form of organized in-service training sessions, seminars, material, other consultants, visits to other schools and money.

Organized in-service training sessions can help by increasing clarity, improving capabilities, managing previously unforeseen organizational requirements, and crediting progressive gains in understanding, skill, and confidence. At in-service workshops, and through classroom observation, participants can work as a group to manage early stages, to receive help on those practices they are actually trying, and to become comfortable with a new set of routines.

Seminars could be held to take stock of developments in practice and to define areas where help is required. Outside partners may serve as facilitators in these sessions, encouraging school staff to turn gripes into observations and confusion into questions.

In some instances, practice can be advanced by making available *materials* that illustrate how ideas have been translated into practice elsewhere or that present a range of possibilities for managing practice. This form of help will be most useful if the materials address the current stage and type of work, i.e., are not presented as a smorgasbord of everything that somebody once tried in the hopes of improving schools. The more complex the practice, the less useful will be materials alone. Nonetheless, prepared materials constitute a sort of "script" on which persons can rely while learning new practice. Teachers who have attempted mastery learning approaches in elementary and secondary schools report

that having a prepared curriculum unit that reflected the mastery approach encouraged them to try the ideas in practice.

It is unlikely that the composition of the team will be broad enough to encompass all the expertise and experience a school needs to draw on in managing change. At particular stages of work, *additional consultants* may be recruited to contribute particular staff support or advice. Overtime, in-school staff should become qualified to train newcomers, thereby reducing the need for outside consultants to continue development of new and valued practices.

Both specific skills and morale can be improved through *visits to other schools* that are attempting similar changes. This support will be most useful where a commitment to improvement is already in place and where some progress has been made in building toward change. Without these conditions, visits to other schools may in fact backfire, leaving teachers or administrators feeling impotent ("we could never manage this") rather than informed.

Very little *money* will be required to make the anticipated changes. They can be managed with no new staff, no sophisticated technology, no new physical space. New materials, where needed, can often be locally produced. The early stages of work, however, will include:

- Travel costs and salary reimbursement for participation of the outside partners. Where the initiative is state sponsored, these costs may be paid by a technical assistance or program grant. Some additional consultant costs may be paid out of established in-service training budgets.

- Materials.

- Correspondence or phone conversations with other schools where similar approaches are being tested.

- Costs of substitute teachers on days when teachers are visiting other schools or participating in in-service sessions; travel costs for school personnel. (While travel expenses may be essential, pay for participating in training sessions does not appear to be necessary; commitment to the idea and a sense of professionalism are more critical factors.)

All aspects of implementation that will be encountered in any school and all dimensions of change can be managed with the ordinary resources and circumstances of public schools, even where those resources are small and the circumstances difficult.

4.5 Stage Five of the Implementation Sequence: Evaluating the Effects

The strategy that is proposed here--organizational change as a principal method of delinquency prevention--amounts to a lot of work in largely unfamiliar territory.

If the approach is to be persuasive, it must be demonstrated that direct effects can be produced on organizational structure that will in turn have indirect, positive effects on delinquent behavior, classroom disruption, vandalism and violence, dropout, and the like.

If the approach is to be effective besides being well intentioned, then partners must be willing to put their best judgment to the test, recognizing that they cannot possibly anticipate all the consequences of their actions. Stage Five work, evaluation, is marked by aggressive curiosity and a rather healthy skepticism, and is intended to:

- Confirm or qualify a set of intents or theoretical perspectives
- Offer practical advice about what to do or how to do something better
- Reveal errors of theory or strategy
- Consolidate gains
- Spread good news and give realistic assessments of bad news
- Offer an overt and deliberate chance to be surprised
- Add to knowledge about those aspects of school organization that most contribute to success or trouble
- Advance our knowledge and practice of change in schools

4.5.1 Distinguishing Real Changes

The changes sought here are complex and diffuse, but important: changes in the values, arrangements, and interactions of school organization; changes in the perspectives and expectations held by and for groups; changes in the beliefs, skills, and behavior of individuals. Questions of measurement aside for the moment, how can persons judge whether something is in fact a change?

A real danger in work of this sort is that the attempts made will amount only to trivial readjustments that in fact maintain present organizational values and arrangements and that reduce the prospects for substantial and consequential change.

If the change is to be enduring and significant, it must come to be a valued, routine part of school life. It must lose its special-project status.

If the change is to be enduring and significant, it must be observable in the classrooms, hallways, offices, and playgrounds of the school and in the interactions of people who spend their days there.

If the change is to be enduring and significant, it must satisfy the routine *organizational* interests and requirements of the school; it must be able to accommodate the requirements of and be reflected in program policy, budget, expectations for staff, and so forth.

If the change is to be effective as a delinquency prevention intervention, it must be followed, over some reasonable period of time, by a demonstrable reduction in delinquent and disruptive behavior, a decrease in truancy and dropout, and an increase in achievement and satisfaction.

4.5.2 Locating Changes

The effects sought and expected using the organizational change approach are diffuse. What form will they take?

First, school *policies* should change in ways that permit more students to belong and to succeed. Examples are changes in the number and nature of school rules and enforcement-disciplinary policies; in policies governing grading and the awarding of formal credit; in policies governing access to particular courses; and in policies governing eligibility for extracurricular, work release, or school-sponsored community-service activities.

Second, *routine practices* should change. In the ordinary business of getting through the day at school, changes have been made in the way that classes are conducted, that students' work is acknowledged and credited, that students and adults interact in classes or hallways, and that students and adults work together on projects, that teachers talk and act among themselves.

Third, administrators, teachers, and students in the school should have a particular set of *shared expectations* for the way that school is supposed to be:

- A shared expectation that shaping the school environment will influence the way that students learn and behave, either positively or negatively. This expectation supports selective organizational change as a strategy for expanding strong points and solving problems. It is an expectation for the practical relevance of change.

- A shared expectation that people who inhabit the school can shape it, can determine in principal ways what sort of place

it is. This is a shared expectation for influence and capacity for change. It is an expectation for the strategic relevance of change efforts in local schools.

- A shared expectation that students will have a greater stake in positive behavior and positive interactions with others where they have opportunities to demonstrate worth and competence, to belong, to be useful, and to be seen by themselves and others in that light. This is an expectation that supports a particular direction for organizational change; it is an expectation for the theoretical relevance of bonding, opportunity, and labeling as guiding assumptions for change.

Fourth, *structural arrangements* should support the actual changes and the shared expectations. The salience of new practices or new expectations will be confirmed (or undermined) by the formal arrangements of the school.

Fifth, the *competence* of students and adults should demonstrably change. Such changes should be reflected in standardized test scores, the incidence of disciplinary actions, administrators' evaluations of teachers, attendance and dropout rates, the image of the school among employers, parents, and others. However, some of the changes sought are difficult, complex, and untested; old habits are hard to break; teachers and administrators have rarely been trained to be vehicles of change. Looking too soon for effects of these sorts could place enough pressure on the change project to place it in jeopardy.

Sixth, *satisfaction* with school should improve. More students, parents, teachers, and administrators should find school a satisfying, productive, healthy, challenging, and humane place. These effects will be reflected in the degree to which persons trust one another, find what they are doing relevant, find their treatment fair, claim to enjoy school, and enjoy a favorable social standing.

In sum, the attempted changes will reveal their effects in ways that can be observed, recorded, or measured, some more readily than others. Yet all of the effects suggested above are important and worth evaluating.

4.5.3 Documenting Changes Using a Range of Methods

Clearly, no single method or single type of measurement will be enough to capture the range of effects that can be expected from selective organizational change. Several complementary methods, informal and formal, will be appropriate. Specific choices will depend upon the design of the intervention in each school, the effect to be traced, the stage of work achieved, and the political and organizational setting. One or more of the following approaches can be employed.

- Narrative and Logs:. These qualitative, anecdotal accounts are particularly useful for documenting the course of the project from initial agreements and intents, through implementation, to the observation of effects of several sorts. Such logs can draw upon documentary evidence including school board agendas and minutes, committee or task-force records, written policy statements and a host of other written materials conventionally tapped for case studies.

- Seminar Discussions: Collective review sessions can be used to promote collegial scrutiny of aims and accomplishments, to pool observations, and to induce a habit of reflection about practices ranging from instruction to administration.

- Informal Conversations: Conversations with administrators, teachers, students, parents and others can reveal emerging practical problems of implementation, emerging expectations within and between groups, and the course of anticipated and unanticipated effects. They also permit partners to remain in touch with day-to-day attempts to translate ideas into practice, and can thereby consolidate support.

- Participation Observation: In this approach, some person or persons join in the action and, at the same time, adopt a stance that permits them to stand back from what's going on to record events and to check out progress. Any participant may serve as an observer, where there is agreement on what is important to notice and how to record key events and interactions. There are instances, for example, where students and teachers have formed teams to conduct school evaluations, and other instances where the director of a change project serves as the primary participant observer. In some cases, outside partners are valuable precisely for their experience in participant observations. Observers may use a variety of methods, ranging from interviews to tabulating official data to keeping a journal. A readable, practical description of participant observations is presented in James Spradley's *Participant Observations*.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper makes a case for basing delinquency prevention efforts in schools. Its claim is first that schools to make a difference, that they are central to present lives and future prospects of young people. Second, schools encounter sufficient volume and range of troublesome behavior--from apathy and withdrawal to violence--to make the problem practically relevant to superintendents, principals, teachers, students, and parents. And third, the evidence that we already have in hand points to certain routine aspects of school life that affect how students do in school and that are under the control of school personnel to modify. Curriculum, governance, and teacher-student interactions in classrooms are all at issue here. All of these elements of "going to school" can, by the way they are managed, influence whether or not students develop a stake in doing well. Thus, practices and policies (and not the people who designed them or who enact them day to day or who respond to them in more or less admired ways) are the targets of proposed work.

The proposed strategy for approaching these targets is organizational change in the public elementary and secondary schools where most of our young people spend most of their first sixteen to eighteen years. Over a period of several years a strategy of organizational change (see Figure 5-1) has promise for improving the internal life of schools in ways that make it more likely that students and teachers will be more successful, have a greater sense of worth and belonging, and be less likely to behave in unadmired ways.

And finally, the insistence on an experimental stance reflecting healthy skepticism and aggressive curiosity comes from the recognition that it is not always clear what works or why or how it was managed. If we are to improve our practice and advance our knowledge in a complex world with complex troubles, good ideas deserve an aggressive, fair, and rigorous test.

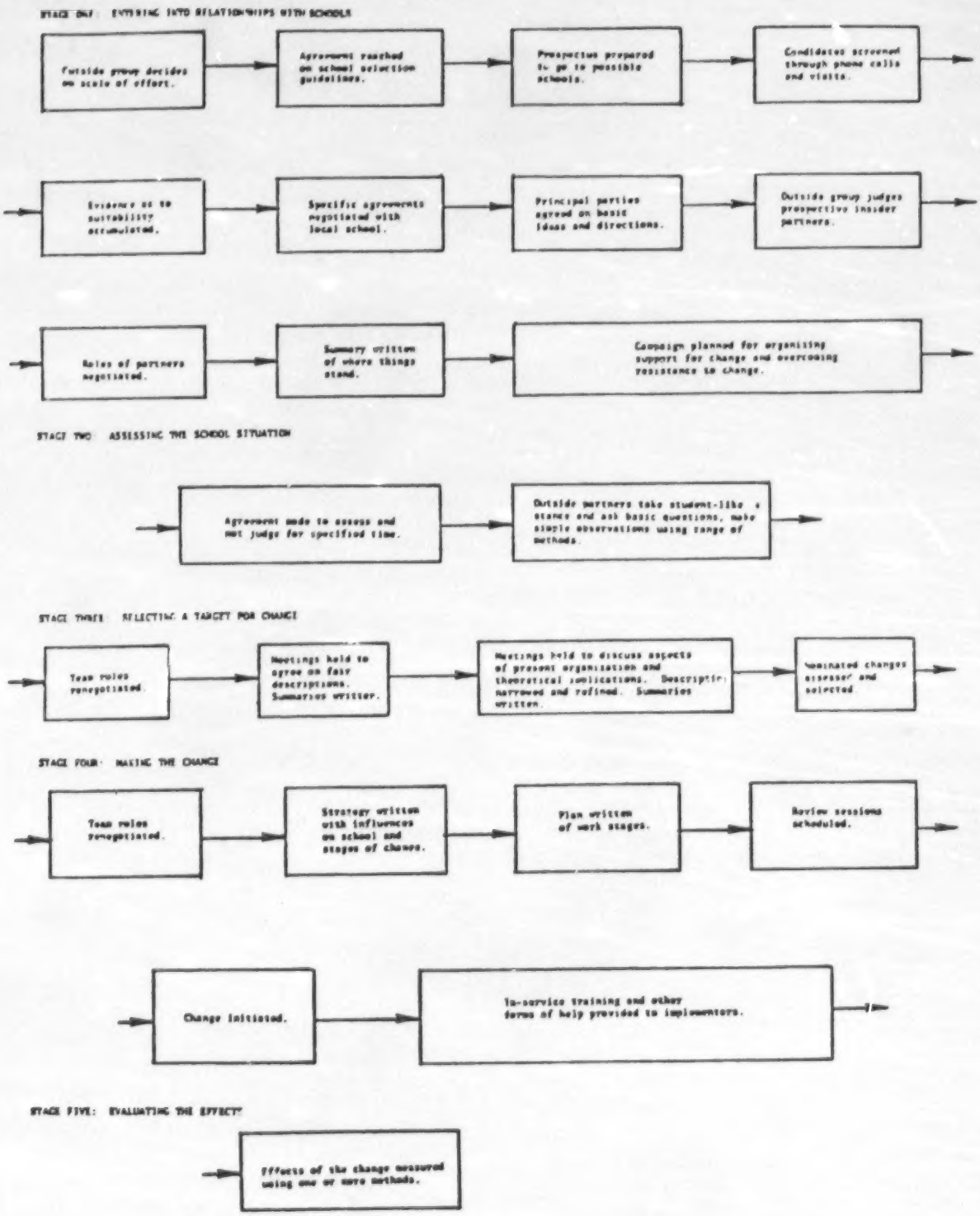
STAGE ONE: ENTERING INTO RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS
Outside group decides on scale of effort.
Agreement reached on school selection guidelines.
Prospectus prepared to go to possible schools.
Candidates screened through phone calls and visits.
Evidence as to suitability accumulated.
Specific agreements negotiated with local school.
Principal parties agreed on basic ideas and directions.
Outside group judges prospective insider partners.
Roles of partners negotiated.
Summary written of where things stand.
Campaign planned for organizing support for change and overcoming resistance to change.
STAGE TWO: ASSESSING THE SCHOOL SITUATION
Agreement made to assess and not judge for specified time.
Outside partners take student-like stance and ask basic questions, make simple observations using range of methods.
STAGE THREE: SELECTING A TARGET FOR CHANGE
Team roles renegotiated.
Meetings held to agree on fair descriptions. Summaries written.
Meetings held to discuss aspects of present organization and theoretical implications. Descriptions narrowed and refined. Summaries written.
Nominated changes assessed and selected.
STAGE FOUR: MAKING THE CHANGE
Team roles renegotiated.
Strategy written with influences on school and stages of change.
Plan written of work stages.
Review sessions scheduled.
Change initiated.
In-service training and other forms of help provided to implementors.
STAGE FIVE: EVALUATING THE EFFECT
Effects of the change measured using one or more methods.

Figure 5-1. Flow Chart of Steps for Making Selected Organization Change In Schools

APPENDIX A

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